

Local Government SERVICE

WHAT IS WRONG WITH NALGO?

—Page 51

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THREEPENCE

CIVIL DEFENCE FAILURES—AND SUCCESSES

OWLY the civil defence organisation throughout the country is beginning to learn and apply the lessons of the past six months. In many areas it will be ready for the bigger and better Blitz " we are promised, and when it comes. In many other areas it might be ready. And in the remainder, we are it will be ready.

But the work of preparation is still, too often, hopelessly slow. There is still too much of the "it won't happen here" attitude, too much of the "we know our job—you can't teach us anything" mind, too little of the spirit of these officers who have gone to the badly-destroyed towns to see how much they can learn, and of those others who, while doing everything laid down in official memoranda, have had the surprise to improve on that minimum.

Home Victims' Needless Hardships

RECENT experience provided a striking illustration of what we mean. An outside bomb fell one evening among some working-class streets in a borough noted for the existence of its A.R.P. organisation. A number of houses were demolished, many more were damaged, and the casualties were heavy. In the main, the services coped admirably with the disaster. Rescue parties worked without a break for 70 hours, until all hope of finding more survivors under the wreckage had been abandoned; homeless were speedily accommodated; large numbers of pioneers and gardeners were mobilised to help with demolition work and the salvage of furniture.

Yet, on the days after the incident, the homeless and bereaved were put to much needless strain and trouble. Many, for example, had to go to the town hall, some distance away, to various scattered offices, to claim relief payments, clothing, new ration books, and so on, and to arrange for the protection of what furniture they had left. Many were compelled to leave their few possessions—all that remained of their homes—being soaked and ruined by rain because the stores secured by the local authority had been filled, and removal vans were few. Most tragic of all, numbers were compelled to travel on foot from one to another of several scattered mortuaries seeking to identify the remains of members of their families.

Missed Opportunities

GOOD organisation could have prevented all this. The wardens' service provided efficient officers to control and co-ordinate the civil defence services. What was to prevent the local authority following the example of Brighton—recorded in LOCAL GOVERNMENT SERVICE as long ago as last November—and stalling in one of the less damaged houses, a commandeered shop, officers able to deal with every problem and to give immediate help and relief? Why could it not have mobilised a fleet of helpers with cars to take charge of the bereaved and convey them to the mortuaries and wherever else they wanted to go? A single radio appeal, or local broadcast, would

have brought forward scores of volunteers. And why could it not have appealed similarly to shops, garages, cinemas, and householders in the area for help in removing and storing

ON OTHER PAGES

	Page
WHAT IS WRONG WITH NALGO?	51
MUST WE REGIONALISE?	by T. E. Parker ... 54
REFORM RATING SYSTEM FIRST,	by Graham Webster ... 54
TWO TYPES OF AUTHORITY	ENOUGH, by Norman Baker ... 55
WHITEHALL MUST CONSULT	OFFICERS, by B. A. Edmonds ... 55
OFFICERS AND COUNCILS OPPOSE	REFORM, by a London Education Clerk ... 55
WHERE THE MONEY GOES,	by an Economist ... 56
ABRANCH'S WAR SAVINGS TRIUMPH	HOW OFFICERS CAN HELP SAVINGS CAMPAIGN, by Norman Heckle ... 57
FEEDING THE FIVE THOUSAND	WHY DOES THE PUBLIC HATE US? by G. W. Vickery ... 58
WARNING CALLS BY HOUSEPHONE,	by Dr. C. G. Millman and P. Whittingham ... 59
BRITAIN'S ONLY MUNICIPAL CON-	DITIONING HOUSE, by Herbert Riley ... 59
CONFERENCE AT COWSLIP,	by "Jackass" ... 60
ROLL OF HONOUR	DIG FOR VICTORY—AND THE B. & O. FUND, by John Young ... 61
NEW N.E.C. MEMBER FOR S. WALES	READERS' FORUM ... 61
YOUR QUESTIONS ANSWERED	AT RANDOM ... 66
SCOTTISH NOTES	SALARIES AND SERVICE CONDITIONS
DISTRICT COMMITTEES	BONUS AND WAR PAY POSITION ... 70

furniture? Had it done so, not a stick need have been left in the rain for a moment.

East Ham's Example

THE need for large numbers of trained helpers to look after the dazed and "bomb-shocked" victims of a raid, to help and comfort them, and to give them advice and practical assistance, has been recognised by some authorities, but not yet by all. One of the best schemes of this kind is the Mutual Assistance of Good Neighbours' Association, founded by Mr. J. E. Austin, honorary A.R.P. officer at East Ham, as long ago as last July.

Mr. Austin realised that thousands of people, including most housewives, are unable, or unwilling, to join and train for the official civil defence services—they cannot give the time, they share the all-too-common "it can't happen to me" attitude, and they are suspicious of, or apathetic towards, organised movements. Yet, should tragedy strike in their own street, they will go to all lengths of sacrifice to help the victims. At present, when a bomb falls, they crowd helplessly around the scene, full of sympathy and goodwill, yet unwittingly impeding the work of the regular services. If their sympathy and goodwill could be mobilised, the result would be of substantial benefit to the victims, to the services, and to the would-be helpers themselves.

Realising these facts, Mr. Austin determined not to deplore the situation, as others have done, but to mend it. The people, he argued, would not come for training—therefore the training must be taken to them. They had little civic consciousness, but they had a strong consciousness of the community of their own street—therefore they must be approached and organised not by districts, but by streets.

Popular Appeal

AIDED by a flair for propaganda, he launched M.A.G.N.A. with a strong popular appeal.

"The little boats of Dunkirk baffled Hitler," his posters cried throughout East Ham. "The little roads, of East Ham, their buckets, bandages, and their big hearts can beat the bomber. Get together now in your own road to

Give simple first-aid,

Quench fires,

Report damage and casualties,

Guide and comfort women and kiddies

whose homes have had a packet,

Offer shelter to anyone suddenly caught

in the open."

Through such posters, distributed by wardens and through simple direct appeals in cinemas and newspapers, meetings were summoned in local halls and schools, at which the scheme was explained either by post wardens or by members of a panel of speakers set up by the local authority and the Ministry of Information. Volunteers were called for and asked to file into separate rooms labelled "fire-fighting," "first aid," "comfort and welfare," and "shelter accommodation." Here, wardens issued forms and enrolled members.

A Triumphant Success

WHERE the formal A.R.P. scheme had failed, this succeeded. Hundreds of who had refrained from joining the regular services for the borough, flocked into the simple services for the street. Within a few days, 300 street committees had been formed. They were given a week in which to organise their activities. During the next fortnight, 16,000 people—roughly, one in seven of East Ham's population—were given elementary A.R.P. instruction.

Specialised training was given to the keener members. A thousand voluntary fire parties were formed—this long before the first "fire Blitz," remember—buying their own stirrup pumps at cost price from the corporation. Friendly rivalry sprang up between streets, and Sunday mornings often saw large bonfires blazing in the roads while eager housewives vied with each other to quench them.

East Ham, in short, took M.A.G.N.A. to its heart, and within a month of the launching of the scheme was probably the best protected borough, especially against incendiary bombs, in the country. Mr. Austin was not above accepting ideas from the groups. Many constructive proposals on A.R.P. organisation

were sent to the town hall and carefully examined.

First-aid parties were formed and doctors and nurses, who had become members, gave instruction. Members of the parties were given a red Maltese cross to display on their houses. Excellent equipment was presented by enthusiasts.

Other householders volunteered to share their homes temporarily with bombed-out people. They displayed a card with the letter "C" (comfort and welfare) in their windows.

Morale Upheld

M.A.G.N.A. did not have long to wait for its first test. On September 7, the East End's "Black Saturday," incendiary and high explosive bombs rained down on East Ham streets and houses. But before serious fires—a beacon to other bombers—could be started, hundreds of undaunted citizens were out quenching the bombs with sand and stirrup-pumps. The comfort and welfare parties took those who had lost their homes into their own houses. This not only mitigated the problem of overcrowded rest centres and insufficient billets, but the quick action, friendliness, and tact of the helpers saved many victims from delayed shock.

Not only has human life and property been saved. Self-confidence has encouraged the morale of the citizens of East Ham. Evacuation has been less than from many other London boroughs.

Enthusiasm has remained, and has even been whetted by trials successfully overcome. Recently, 150 incendiary bombs fell on four streets. Within 20 minutes, all were under control, and in 35 minutes all fires had been extinguished—almost entirely by members of M.A.G.N.A.

A Job for Housewives

THIS is a fine achievement, and a triumphant demonstration of the superiority of the direct human appeal over formal official organisation. Has its lesson yet been fully learned?

A similar scheme, which has been no less successful, has been the Housewives' Service organised at Stoke Newington. All members of this service—and there are well over 1,000—display a card in their windows. The card means that in that house passers-by, children, old people, and invalids may find shelter in a raid; that hot water and hot drinks will be available there immediately after the raid; that rescue parties will be able to find out there whether a damaged house was occupied, and where its occupants normally sheltered; and that casualties may rest there while awaiting transport. Like M.A.G.N.A., this service has caught the imagination of the women of Stoke Newington. Though they are too tied by household duties to become wardens, first-aid workers, and canteen helpers, they see here something they can all do—and they are doing it. And, like M.A.G.N.A., it is psychologically sound. For, as we all know by now, nothing preserves morale so well in raids as a job of work.

Rest Centre Guides

ANOTHER excellent scheme, on different lines, is being operated in a northern town. Here, the A.R.P. controller has had the imagination to realise—as few elsewhere seem yet to have done—that after heavy bombing people are often dazed, bewildered and helpless. Posters advising the uninjured "bombed out" to ask a policeman or a warden the way to the nearest rest centre and telling them to go there seem simple and clear enough when they are drafted. But at night, in the dust, turmoil, and confusion of a heavy raid, and with bomb-shocked people groping in darkness, the advice becomes meaningless.

Appreciating this, the controller here has organised, through the W.V.S. who run the

rest centres, a special service of guides. At present fifty are being trained. Equipped with armband, notebook, pencil, torch, a mackintosh with capacious pockets, and a rucksack or some rope or strapping (for carrying bundles), they report at the appropriate warden's post immediately after bombing, and from there are sent to the scene of the incident. Their duties are best illustrated in these extracts from the notes issued for their guidance:

"The Refuge Guides have the task of making as easy and comfortable as possible the transference of families from their wrecked houses or the danger area to houses of friends or relatives or to a rest centre. Similarly, they will assist persons when they are moved from the rest centre to billets. . . .

"The primary duty of a guide is to help wardens and police to clear the houses and the affected area of able-bodied persons. Though not casualties, these persons will often be overwrought and hysterical and very occasionally truculent and aggressive. The guide must show a sympathetic understanding and answer all questions quickly and confidently.

"A child's doll or a simple family relic may, if recovered, make all the difference between hysteria and quiescence. . . .

"Remember that a guide's value lies in the possession of a large fund of common sense."

The guides are instructed to keep a record of all homeless persons accommodated with friends and relatives, and, when all have been dealt with, to offer their services at the rest centres.

A similar service would be useful during the days after the raid. Injured people may be acutely worried about relatives, about valuables left in their homes, and about other personal matters to which they are unable to attend. Could not a service be organised of people who would help them to deal with these problems?

Arbitration Tribunal

BY the time these words are read, the National Arbitration Tribunal will have heard the first two of the series of test cases which NALGO is bringing before it.

Many readers may feel that there has been unconscionable delay in having these cases heard; but the fault has not been NALGO's. A number of disputes were registered with the Ministry of Labour as soon as the Order was published, but the authorities concerned one after another agreed to the association's demands before they could be taken to arbitration, with the result that it was necessary to substitute others.

The two disputes down for hearing on February 27 and 28 were with Bolton corporation, on the ground that it had refused to supplement in any way the war service pay of members of its staff with the Forces, and with Lytham St. Anne's borough council, on the ground that, in awarding its officers a bonus of only 3s. p.w. on salaries up to £260, it had failed to adopt the recommendation of the Lancashire and Cheshire provincial council.

While it would be premature to foreshadow the result of either hearing, it is clear that the decision of the Tribunal will be of considerable importance to officers not only in the towns directly concerned, but throughout the country, and we hope to publish a report of the proceedings next month.

A NALGO Planning Commission?

WHILE the article we publish this month by "Critic" raises a number of important and highly controversial questions for NALGO, what interests us most in it is his suggestion that the association should set up its own planning commission to survey the whole field of local government to-day and to make recommendations for its reform and development to meet post-war conditions. For months past, we have urged in these columns the need for local government

officers themselves to play a bigger part than they do in the direction of the service. As the people best qualified to speak, they have the right not merely to be consulted whenever changes are contemplated, but to exercise some definite measure of control over those changes. Without such consultation and control, local government officers might well find themselves compelled to accept far-reaching measures of reconstruction, some of which might be prejudicial both to their own interests and to the interests of the service as a whole.

Leicester Leads the Way

THESE considerations occurred recently to the members of the Leicester branch and on February 5 the branch executive decided to set up a committee on the precise lines suggested by "Critic." Consisting, in the first place, of the public relations sub-committee, with power to co-opt, it will be known as the NALGO Reconstruction Advisory Committee. Equipped with authority to invite any person in the service to give evidence and opinion before it, in terms of reference, "wide enough to cover any problem in which the local government service is directly or indirectly concerned," will include:

The formulation of plans and schemes of benefit to the community in post-war replanning;

The examination of reconstruction suggestions proposed by individuals and groups inside or outside NALGO;

The reporting of its plans and conclusions and the making of representation to appropriate bodies set up by the city council or the Government to deal with reconstruction and replanning; and

The consideration of problems arising out of civil defence and war welfare work.

This is a fine and ambitious programme, which other branches might usefully emulate. Most important of all, however, is that the N.E.C. should follow Leicester's lead and appoint a really strong and influential local government planning commission on national lines.

Co-ordinating Charity Appeals

IT is encouraging to learn that the pioneer effort at co-ordinating and simplifying appeals on behalf of war charities made by the Norfolk War Charities Appeals Council, to which we referred in November, is making good progress. So far, among many other bodies which are helping, the staffs of at least four local authorities—Norwich City, Norfolk County, Docking R.D.C., and St. Faith's & Aylsham R.D.C.—are contributing regularly and the secretary, Mr. Guy Keeling, hopes soon to secure the support of all NALGO branches in the county.

The Council, which is assisting 23 separate war charities—and thus getting rid of the nuisance and administrative wastefulness of separate appeals—has already raised nearly £18,000, and is expanding its work rapidly. We commend this practical and sensible idea to branches everywhere.

Hospitality for Warriors

ONE more branch, that of the Essex River Catchment Board, has offered to extend personal hospitality, with the use of baths, etc., to members of NALGO in the Forces stationed in its area. Members wishing to take advantage of this offer should get in touch with the secretary, L. E. Innes, Essex Rivers House, Springfield Road, Chelmsford.

An Apology

WE owe an abject apology to the members of the Rothwell (Yorkshire) U.D.C. branch whose achievement in raising £160 to help the local authority's fund for the provision of mobile canteens was, by a piece of editorial carelessness, attributed to the Rothwell (Northants) branch.

WHAT IS WRONG WITH NALGO?

51

In this provocative article, CRITIC, a contributor who has had exceptional opportunities of taking a detached view of NALGO, discusses recent criticisms of the Association, puts forward his own, and makes some constructive suggestions. We offer his views as a basis for discussion and expansion.

SOME months ago, we are told, that infatigable specialist in human frailty, Dr. Goebbels, mobilised the whole body of German students for a stupendous task, calling for all the patience and plodding pertinacity of which the German student is a master. They were to ransack the records of the centuries, to sift all the newspapers, books, memoirs, novels, and diplomatic documents they could find and, from the results of their labours, to build up a vast, detailed exposure of British infamy through the ages. We are now hearing and seeing some of the results of their labours; while the highlights are reserved as special titbits to adorn the speeches of the Fuehrer and his party leaders, the main mass provides an inexhaustible quarry for Snow White Haw Haw and his seven dwarfs.

Let us imagine, for a moment, that one of that student body were turned loose on our own association, and ordered to provide his leader with a report on NALGO, its strength and weaknesses, its virtues and its vices. How would his report read?

He would not need to go far in his researches. A casual perusal of "Readers' Forum" in LOCAL GOVERNMENT SERVICE for the past few months would provide him with a wealth of spicy reading for the Department of Public Enlightenment.

"On the evidence of its own members," he would say, "this association is effete, decadent, and demoralised. Although the product of a so-called democracy, drawing its members from men and women who serve what they describe as the basis of the British democratic system, it is itself anti-democratic. It is ruled by an 'arbitrary and autocratic' National Executive Council, commonly described as the 'Old Gang,' fearful of criticism, unaware of the working of its branches, unwilling to face the democratic machinery of election and conference. Yet, while zealous in the defence of its own position and privileges, this same council is 'blind to the problems of its members, asleep when it should be asserting their claims and rights.'

"Even when it has been aroused reluctantly to action, it is weak and ineffective. It adopts a 'futile cap-in-hand policy' in approaching its 'employers,' the local authorities, while it 'can be moulded like putty by the decisions of government departments.' Lacking the ability to lead, it is resistant to pressure from behind or below, blocking all progress as a broken-down motor-bus might block a road filled with eager racing cars. Yet, although without drive and energy, unable to secure adoption of the policies it endorses, and 'too weak to assert itself alone,' it remains snobbishly independent of all outside help, refusing to link up with other trade unions and enlist their strength to the aid of its weakness. For this reason, 'it has often been the laughing-stock of other organisations.'

"Nor, with the exception of a few keen critics, is the main body of the association, the 'rank and file' as it is known, in any healthier position. Most of its members are apathetic, too lazy to attend its meetings save when sports, games, dances and other enter-

tainments are being discussed; too timid to insist on a hearing for their views and policies. Although organised in branches, each branch claims and exercises a self-destructive autonomy, rejecting corporate activity; some even refuse to adopt the policies, weak and ineffective though they are, of the National Executive Council, preferring an attitude of anæmic sycophancy. As the association as a whole is 'ruled' by a lifeless body of obstructionists, so the branches and districts are controlled by a hierarchy of 'old gangs'

experience of many years, of their deficiencies. If the latter is true, have we any guarantee that, were an election to be held this year, the association would suddenly amend its policy of past decades and acquire the wisdom to elect the right men—particularly at a time when one-third of its members, including, no doubt, a high proportion of the right men, are far removed from its activities? If the former is true, and the N.E.C. was efficient in 1939, has anything happened in the two years since then to demoralise it?

Let us be honest about this. Were an election to be held this year, would we get a new and better N.E.C.—or would we not re-elect the present one? Past experience suggests that the existing N.E.C. would assemble again, substantially unchanged. Why then go to all the fuss, trouble, and expense of an election when its result is a foregone conclusion?

The same argument applies to a conference. At the last normal conference, again in 1939, delegates substantially endorsed the N.E.C.'s policy, as they have done for a number of years past. Is there any suggestion that a conference or delegate meeting this year would not do the same? And, if there is not, why go to the colossal expense and difficulty of calling one, particularly when it is more than probable that

the war situation would cause its last-minute cancellation?

The greatest value of a NALGO conference nowadays rests in the insight into the association's organisation and the training and stimulus it provides for younger delegates; but to-day the younger delegates would perform be absent. What imperative purpose, then, would a conference serve? If we are sensible and realistic, I think we must recognise that the results of neither an election nor of a conference would justify them to-day. It is easy, in their absence, to accuse the N.E.C. of dictatorship, and it would be pleasant to preserve the outward forms of democratic procedure; in fact, however, all that an election or a conference could do can still be done, no less democratically, through the machinery of district committees, every one of which is already fully represented on the N.E.C.

That members and branches should, in the same breath, demand preservation in full of NALGO's democratic machinery and immediate affiliation with the T.U.C. betrays an inconsistency which even "Much Cowslip" would scorn. Whatever we feel about it, we must admit that affiliation is a serious question, which might have far-reaching consequences for the association, and one that can properly be decided only by a majority vote of all its members, after careful review of all the facts and arguments. Yet advocates of affiliation seem to expect the N.E.C. to rush the association into it on their unsupported demand alone. Some, even, see no wrong in urging their colleagues to blackmail it into adopting their policy by indirect pressure, such as a boycott of the Building Society. Yet they would be the first—and rightly—to scream dictatorship were it to decide, say, to subscribe to the funds of the Conservative party.



NALGOLLIVER'S TRAVELS

whom the members, despite their constant grumbling, feebly re-elect to office year after year.

"In short, my Fuehrer, I find that this NALGO is a typical institution of the decadent plutodemocracies, ready for immediate Gleichschaltung into the framework of virile and disciplined Fascism. Out of its own mouth it convicts itself."

Such, we may suppose, would be the report submitted by the earnest Nazi student, as a result of his researches into the columns of NALGO's official journal. How far would it be true—and if there is any truth in it, what are we to do about it?

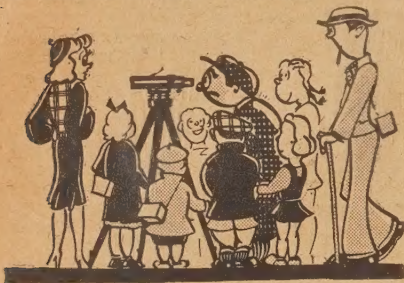
Let us examine the charges—levelled against the association, be it remembered, not by some outside critic, but by its own members.

The N.E.C., they say, is autocratic, obstructive, fearful of criticism, out of touch with the opinions of members, and unwilling or unable to carry out their demands. In support of that criticism, they point to the Council's decision not to hold a conference or elections this year, its failure to affiliate to the T.U.C. the moment a few members and branches ask it to do so, and its delay in securing from every local authority in the country uniform scales of salaries, and adoption of the national bonus award, the making up of war service pay, and Whitleyism.

But in making those criticisms, do not our members convict themselves? The present N.E.C. was elected in 1939, two years ago. It apparently gave them satisfaction then, for of the total of 52 members, only ten were newly appointed, and most of the 42 re-elected had sat upon it for several years. From this fact, only two conclusions can be drawn: either the N.E.C. as a whole was efficient in 1939; or it was inefficient, and the members deliberately appointed the wrong men to represent them, despite their knowledge, based on the

In what way has the N.E.C. failed on this question? It has not ignored it. It has taken the demand seriously and has initiated a full and careful inquiry into the case for and against affiliation. It intends to submit the results of that inquiry to members, with its own recommendations, which they may endorse or reject as they think fit. That is the democratic way. The N.E.C. would indeed be deserving of all the brickbats flung at it were it to have taken any other course.

Most of the critics, again, seem to regard the N.E.C. as a somnolent collection of comfortable senior officers, ignorant of the problems of the rank and file and resistant to all appeals for vigorous action. Yet from whom came the drive, in 1938 and 1939, for the national campaign on salaries? From



A Tip for Surveyors

whom came the pressure, during recent years, to give Whitleyism a national status and scope? Who secured the passage of the Local Government Staffs (War Service) Act? Who advanced, negotiated, and secured the two war bonus awards from the National Whitley Council, and advocated pressure on all local authorities to adopt them? Who has appeared continuously before successive Ministers since the war began to press the claims of local government officers and protect the rights of those affected by war conditions? Who urged the setting up throughout the country of area education committees and the organisation of summer and weekend schools? Who launched the public relations policy and called on branches everywhere to support it by the appointment of public relations committees and correspondents? There can be only one answer—the N.E.C.

Branches Indicted

And who, where those measures have fallen short of the goal desired, has been responsible for the failure? Who sought to sabotage the salaries campaign by insisting on full local autonomy in negotiation and the complacent acceptance of shocking conditions? Who refused to have any contact with Whitleyism, fearful that it might prejudice local privileges? Who neglected to press claims for war service pay, lest their acceptance should involve a curtailment of increments for the men remaining at home? Who tried to torpedo the bonus awards by accepting—sometimes even putting forward—lesser claims, or refusing bonuses offered? Who neglected to attend the summer and weekend schools when they were set up? Who robbed public relations of much of its possible effectiveness by ignoring it completely? Who, in short,

opposed, frustrated, sidestepped, or sabotaged every progressive measure of trade union policy adopted by the N.E.C.? Let us be honest and admit it—the branches.

Not all of them, nor even a large proportion of them, of course. Many have been as active and progressive as the N.E.C.; some more so—as, indeed, they should be. But not a few have been the reverse. Whatever be the cause—indifference, complacency, snobbery, fear, or just plain selfishness—many branches have failed to support the association's policy and have sometimes openly impeded it. Why else should it have been necessary for the council, when the salaries campaign was launched, to send a special sub-committee around the country to plead, cajole, bully, and threaten branches in the "black spots"; even to allow the N.E.C. to go to their authorities on their behalf? Why else was it necessary for the council, in 1939 and again in 1940, to secure from conference the authority to override a branch which refused to help itself?

But it is not my object in this article to whitewash the N.E.C. and blacken the branches. My object is merely to show that, if faults there be in NALGO, they are not exclusive to the N.E.C. We must all share the blame and apply the remedy.

On the whole, I suggest, most of the criticisms of the association advanced in "Readers' Forum" have been trivial and superficial, even where they have had some justification. Nobody, least of all its members, would claim that the N.E.C. possessed a monopoly of the brains, energy, and negotiating ability within NALGO. Nobody would pretend that it had been successful in everything it had attempted. Nor would any honest member suggest that it had received the fullest support of which he personally, and his branch collectively, were capable. Criticism based on failure to reach some arbitrary standard of success is always futile; we cannot do better than the sum of our qualities, good and bad.

NALGO's Real Faults

Nevertheless, there are faults in NALGO, faults more fundamental than any yet mentioned. First and foremost, I suggest, come the faults in the structure of the association. We are fond of claiming that NALGO represents, and speaks for, 120,000 local government officers throughout the country. That claim is false. For the individual member is a member, not of a national association, but of a local branch. His branch is largely autonomous and independent. On most issues, it can act without reference to the association; it may—and sometimes does—flout and defy the association's policy. There is one big and important branch which has consistently refused to have any truck with Whitleyism in its area, though Whitleyism is a basic plank in NALGO's platform. Only a week or two ago, another big and important branch deliberately put forward a war bonus claim substantially lower than the national and provincial council award and was rebuked by members of its local authority for asking too little for its members.

Many similar instances could be cited. Against such branches, the association as a whole is powerless. It can reach decisions, adopt policies, prepare programmes, but it has no authority to see that they are carried out. It is accustomed to complain of the autonomy of local authorities; is that complaint altogether justified so long as its own branches maintain and jealously uphold a similar autonomy? How can it hope to attain the power and influence its members desire without disciplined co-ordination? So long as the N.E.C. is compelled to appeal to branches for support of its policies, and has no authority to require their execution, so long will the association as a whole fall short of its fullest influence.

Within the branches themselves, organisation is not always as effective as it might be. There are still too many which are controlled by a few dominating officers, whether chief officials or not, with the rest of the branch meekly obeying their behests or ignoring their activities altogether. There are still too many branches which are little more than sports and social clubs, securing full meetings to arrange for the annual dance, but melting away when questions of national policy figure on the agenda. There are still too many branches which are ridden with snobbery or fear, or both, too keenly desirous of maintaining their "happy relations" with the local authority to demand adequate standards for their members, too timid to fight for what they know to be just demands.

All members of the branch are responsible for these faults, and only by co-operative action can they be remedied. If the members lack the courage to elect the right branch officers, if they lack the enthusiasm to tackle their problems with energy, or the enterprise to carry a campaign to its conclusion, they have only themselves to blame. It is futile to sit back, as so many do, and blackguard the branch officers, the district committee, or the N.E.C., and to expect affiliation with the T.U.C. or some similar talisman to work miracles.

The District Committee

Beyond the branch, and nominally serving as a stepping-stone between it and the N.E.C., is the district committee. In conception, the district committee is admirable. It should serve as a two-way co-ordinating channel, adapting national policies to local needs (though without challenging their principles), supervising their execution, stimulating the branches in its area and, in the reverse direction, hearing, sifting, and assembling opinion in the branches to form the basis of policy resolutions for submission to the N.E.C. When the N.E.C. adopts a particular policy, it should be able to rely on the district committee not only to pass it on to the branches in its area, but to see that it is carried out, giving help here, a touch of the whip there. And when a branch desires the adoption of a particular policy, or displays notable enterprise in one direction or another, it should be able to report to the district committee in the knowledge that its

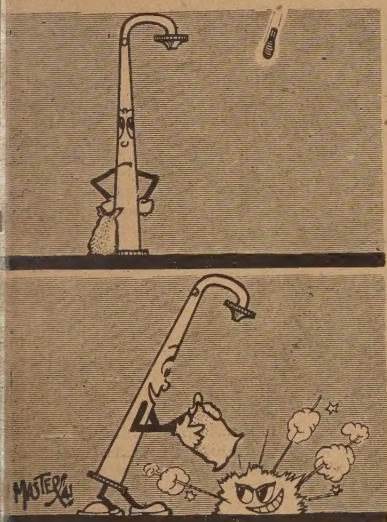


"It's the wife's night at the pictures!"

policy will be thoroughly examined and, if generally approved, passed on to the N.E.C., and that its enterprise will be reported to other branches for further adoption. The district committee, in short, should be the force which makes national policy local and local policy national.

But is it? Very rarely, I fear. Most district

committees, it seems to me, are unreal bodies, floating in space like Mahomet's coffin between the heavenly regions of the N.E.C. and the earthly regions of the branches, without any tangible connection with either. Each is at once too big and too small—too big in composition to thrash out and develop policy, too small in influence and authority to secure acceptance of decisions. It would be better, I fancy, were each district committee to possess, in addition to its executive, a small policy sub-committee cabinet composed of a few of its most energetic members, free of detail matters and branch or N.E.C. entanglements, and thus



able to concentrate on major problems. They could watch both the branches and the N.E.C. and in this way act as a powerful co-ordinating, stimulating, and disciplinary force. With such a cabinet, the district committee could play a significant part in NALGO's organisation—a part which cannot be claimed for it to-day.

Where The N.E.C. Fails

And what of the N.E.C.? On the whole, and despite its many critics, I feel that it works efficiently, and it would work much more efficiently were the reforms already advocated to be adopted. Given more disciplinary power over branches, and more assistance, both in developing and enforcing policy from district committees, it could greatly extend its effectiveness.

But there are, nevertheless, substantial faults in its structure. It is an unwieldy body; its 52 members, meeting together for a few hours once a quarter (in normal times), cannot pretend to give to the many problems facing NALGO the full attention they deserve. Like many local authorities, it is overwhelmed with detail, submerged in a flood of purely executive matters which should be delegated to others; and, again like many local authorities, it is—if one may judge from reports of its proceedings—inclined to approve major policies after a few minutes of discussion while haggling for half an hour over a single Benevolent and Orphan Fund case. It has, it seems to me, been modelled too closely on the pattern of the local authority, and suffers from the local authority's major defects—excessive departmentalism and lack of a dominating directive force. It is, in consequence, inclined to drift at the mercy of its separate committees, and to confirm policy rather than evolve it.

It would be better, I suggest, were it modelled more on the pattern of Parliament. Like the district committee, it needs a small and keen-brained cabinet, composed of a few men and women free of all committee allegiances, whose task would be to survey the whole

field of NALGO and local government activity and to concern themselves exclusively with major problems. They would have the power to call special meetings of each of the committees and to direct its thoughts along particular lines, planning, co-ordinating, expanding. And, more important, they would have the power to initiate policy independently of the committee structure, to raise questions which at present are possibly excluded because they are outside the ambit of any of the standing committees.

Apart from its directive organisation, NALGO is unwieldy and ill-balanced. Valuable as its ancillaries are—and I would not weaken them in any way, but rather strengthen and expand them—they are tending to-day, I suggest, to overshadow the association's primary function as a trade union.

This development is a result, no doubt, of the fact that the N.E.C. must cut its coat according to its cloth. Income is limited, and it is thus inevitable that ancillaries, which produce profits, or at least pay their way, should obtain adequate staff, while organisation, which shows no cash return, is starved of staff.

More Organisers Wanted

To-day, the whole of the trade union work for 120,000 members is in the hands of a dozen full-time officers—one for each 10,000 members. This, it seems to me, is a fantastic state of affairs. How many other big trade unions, I wonder, are so sparsely staffed? What we need, I suggest, is at least one full-time organiser for each 5,000 members, together with a strong directive organisation at Headquarters, composed of people qualified to undertake research, to sift statistics, to prepare cases, and with such freedom from petty routine that they can sit back periodically and examine major questions of policy and plan campaigns on national lines. While few branch officers, I fancy, will have any complaints to level against the existing staff, all must agree that a staff twice or three times its size, and backed by a strong headquarters' organisation, could do infinitely more.

This could not be built up without money. Well, why not? NALGO's subscriptions to-day are among the lowest in the trade union world. Most manual workers—as the recent Ministry of Labour inquiry into family budgets showed—pay considerably more in trade union subscriptions than we do. They know that it pays them to do so—as it would pay us.

Trade Unionism on the Cheap

The truth is that, for years, NALGO members have had their trade unionism on the cheap. To-day, the future is too serious for us to continue with those cut-price methods. If we are to have the association we want, we must be prepared to pay for it—by a general raising of subscriptions and, still more, by drastic alteration of subscription grading. It is ridiculous that the member earning £1,500 a year should pay no more than the member earning £460, or that the member earning £450 should pay only 1s. 3d. a month more than the member earning £130. Indeed, it is probable that, were the subscriptions of the higher paid ranks—who could well afford it—to be increased, those of the juniors could remain unchanged.

An increase in income which such a reform would bring would enable the association to remedy what I regard as its greatest fault, and fill its most essential need.

At present, it is concerned almost exclusively with the local government officer, his salary, his service conditions, his educational standard, and the regard in which he is held by the public. It concerns itself scarcely at all with local government itself—the machine he serves. And that, it appears to me, is a fundamental shortcoming. For the structure of local government is vitally important to the officer;

more than anything else it will determine his salary and service conditions, his education, and his future. We know only too well how defects in that structure—the obsolete borough, the impoverished authority, excessive local autonomy—are depressing standards to-day. We know that tremendous changes are inevitable after the war. Yet we are doing nothing to control those changes, despite the influence they are bound to have upon our careers, and despite the fact that we, more than most people, have the knowledge and the experience to suggest how best they can be made.

A NALGO Planning Commission

AS LOCAL GOVERNMENT SERVICE has repeatedly urged in the past, NALGO has the right to a voice in planning the reconstruction of local government. It has the knowledge and the skill to make a useful contribution to that task. I go further and say that it has a duty to itself, to its members, and to the local government service as a whole, to make its voice heard.

But it will not do that by its present method of ignoring the problem or vaguely scratching at it. It must tackle it seriously. What it needs, I suggest, is a permanent planning commission, sitting throughout the war and after the war. The commission, independent of the N.E.C., would be composed of the best brains in the service, with power to co-opt from outside the service. Equipped with wide terms of reference, it would survey the whole field of local government, examine, without prejudice, all the plans for reform advanced from any quarter, and then proceed to prepare its own, in outline and in detail. It would submit a series of interim reports, leading up to one final report—or, better still, it would remain in permanent session, since there can be no finality to the evolution of local government. Its prestige would be such that no government could afford to ignore it; its findings and recommendations would be recognised as proceeding from the best authorities in the land.



"Say—your flat's on fire!"

"S'all right—there's nobody at home!"

To appoint and maintain such a commission would be expensive. But it would be the best investment NALGO has ever made. For it would place it at once into the highest position of authority. It would ensure that its voice was heard and its opinions respected. It would transform it from a relatively small trade union into a mighty influence for good—the good not of its own members alone, but of the nation as a whole.

MUST WE REGIONALIZE?

On this and the next page we publish a further selection of readers' comments on the proposals for local government reform made by Dr. W. A. Robson in the December journal. More constructive proposals and criticisms will be welcomed.

By T. E. PARKER, A.L.A.A., chief valuation officer and deputy chief financial officer, Wigston U.D.C.

AFTER fifteen months of war, and despite the intensive blitzkrieg on various parts of our island, the following words appeared in heavy type in the *Daily Sketch* on January 2, 1941:

"The British have a genius for local responsibility and local government, and for managing their own affairs by small bodies."

Those words from the national Press bear striking contrast to the view expressed by Dr. Robson in the passage: "Only people who are blind or ignorant or foolish can believe that our local government system is coping with these vast changes in even a tolerably satisfactory manner."

Dr. Robson speaks of the larger towns such as London, Birmingham, and Manchester having become centres of repulsion, yet his proposed plan of reform provides for the division of Britain for local government purposes "into a number of large regions—probably nine or ten would be the best number." Such a region, he says, "would be a suitable territory for the administration of the large-scale municipal services, and county boroughs and the larger non-county boroughs could remain unchanged and the smaller boroughs and urban districts would require to be substantially enlarged and strengthened both as regards resources and staff."

Chief officers of all local authorities are at present carrying on with much depleted staffs, most of whom are temporary. The resulting difficulties are enormous. Despite these administrative difficulties, due entirely to war conditions, the great humanitarian services of providing homes for evacuees, education, fire protection, public health, and air raid precautions are provided efficiently and on a more extensive scale every day by the local government bodies whom Dr. Robson admits were established and developed to administer the arts of peace and to promote social welfare.

Surely, if ever there was a time when the cause of regionalization could have been put to the test, it was when the re-organization of local government in Tyneside came under review. The Royal Commission, however, decided otherwise.

From my own experience of local government administration with borough, urban, and rural authorities in the provinces, I know that these authorities are by no means "overwhelmed and stupefied by the magnitude of their task," as Dr. Robson suggests. Even if these authorities are, as he submits, unable to provide public health and education services for the stream of children and adults that has poured into their areas, I maintain that this is not their fault. Many of them have, during times of peace, wished to proceed with comprehensive schemes of sewerage, water supply, hospital accommodation, etc., but have been prevented from bringing their schemes to fruition by lack of financial resources and the unwillingness of the central government to grant the necessary financial aid.

Dr. Robson continues: "How can poor and ill-equipped Part III authorities, for instance, be expected to provide education for children evacuated from wealthy and progressive county boroughs at the standard at which they are accustomed to receive it?" From this it would appear that the county boroughs have become wealthy and progressive at the expense of urban and rural districts and small non-county boroughs. The solution would seem to lie in a more equitable distribution of grants from the central government. It is a fact that

the areas which have been neglected during peace are the refuge and support of the nation in war.

Regarding Dr. Robson's proposals for the future of the local government officer, it will, I feel, be generally accepted by officers that the Whitley council is competent to promote the unification of the local government service, provided that all local authorities become constituent members of that council through the guiding influence of their chief officers and of N.A.L.G.O. The findings of a national body such as the Whitley council are more likely to be acceptable to all parties and would also tend to greater uniformity than would the findings of a regional local government body.

Membership of certain established professional bodies is usually a condition of the appointment of a local authority's chief officers. In this direction, local authorities are given a lead by the central government in Section 239 of the Local Government Act, 1933, which directs that only members of the professional accountancy bodies specified are qualified to be appointed as professional auditors of a borough council's accounts. According to Dr. Robson's plan, personnel commissions would act as organs of recruitment for all authorities in the region, on the basis of a series of common examinations. Would the eminent professional gentlemen

whose services are being sought by local authorities be at all attracted by recruitment on his suggested basis? The minimum educational attainment of junior entrants to the service is now generally recognised as the school-leaving certificate of the secondary school.

The establishment of regional commissions may serve a purpose in time of war when, for strategic reasons, it is necessary for the central departments of state to decentralise. In practice, however, it is frequently necessary for regional officers to submit the proposals of local authorities within the region to the central department concerned, so that even this attempt at regionalisation would serve no useful purpose during peace.

If there is a threat to the future existence of local authorities in London, this is a problem of its own. No analogy can be drawn between London government and local government in the provinces, due mainly to the extensive control of the London County Council over the services in the metropolis, even during peace.

When this war is over, it is essential that democratic local government should continue. This is one of the rights for which we are fighting, and is the backbone of the united front which symbolises the nation's war effort. Had there been no system of local government at the beginning of the war, one wonders what words the government, through the B.B.C. would substitute for: "Full information may be obtained from your local town hall or council offices." The Minister of Health, in his 1941 new year message, says: "Local authorities carried on, and are still carrying on, stubbornly and efficiently."

REFORM RATING SYSTEM FIRST

By GRAHAM WEBSTER, Canterbury

IT is doubtful, I fear, whether many local government officers will be able to reply to Dr. Robson's stimulating and provocative article; we are all so busy tackling our own particular section of the vast problem of wartime administration, and it is almost impossible to visualize the sudden widespread difficulties as a whole. But we must realize that these violent stresses suddenly imposed on local government machinery will cause some serious changes in the organization sooner or later. To make these merely a matter of centralizing or regionalizing the directing authorities surely neglects the foundation of a democratic local government system. There has always been a tendency among officials, given to theorizing on this subject, to avoid the position of the elected representatives and their power to levy the rate and spend the proceeds. Perhaps Dr. Robson regards this as merely incidental to the main problem of re-organization, but I doubt if any councillor, county, town, or parish, would agree with him.

We are all aware of, and somewhat disturbed by, the increasing power of the central authority, exercised through financial control, and, as Dr. Robson points out, if this is extended by appointed commissioners, our democratic institution is in serious jeopardy.

Its preservation depends on a satisfactory solution being found to this economic problem, and any discussion on centralizing or regionalizing which omits this is flirting with an even severer bureaucracy.

It is obvious that certain services, such as fire-fighting, A.R.P., public utilities and town planning, to mention a few, can never function properly on a purely local basis. If some are regionalized and others not, the economic viewpoint, as seen by the local ratepayer, will become more confused than ever, and even farcical.

The present rating system has surely outlived its usefulness. We all know its peculiar anomalies and injustices, but far worse is its narrowing effect on the mentalities of councillors and officials alike.

It is here that the reform must begin, and this iniquitous system, like a vile and suppurating

cancer, be cut cleanly away. To substitute a tax based solely on income would be unfair, but with the increasing uniformity of social benefit, the bulk must be drawn from this source. The amenities provided by environment and circumstance would be compensated by percentage deductions or additions.

There are naturally many complications in this form of levy, but it could be made simplicity itself compared with the antiquated and ramshackle system with which we are at present saddled and to which the *coup de grâce* has almost been given by local wartime conditions.

But can the democratic ideal still be preserved and local needs receive just attention?

To take away the local levy would seem to deprive the "parochial" magnates of all their power. But could not a new type of councillor be developed, elected to and administering one particular service only?

Dr. Robson suggests three groups of authorities, regional, sub-regional, and local. This is certainly a step in the right direction; but why not go the full distance and allow the services themselves to define the areas requiring to be administered?

Thus, to cite a few examples: town planning, communications, and coastal erosion need organizing on a national basis; water supply and sewage disposal on an area covering their own watershed; street cleansing and refuse collecting on areas based on density of population; while libraries and museums could be governed by their own committees.

Hence, the first step would be to define the administrative area for the particular service. The committee of management would then be elected by the people benefiting from that service in that area.

Thus we see the new type of councillor, not seeking election for local glory, but attempting to improve and justly to administer a service in which he is interested.

It must be admitted that such a system would deal a smashing blow to deeply rooted civic traditions. But why should such archaic and effete rituals stand in the way of a progressive society?

TWO TYPES of AUTHORITY ENOUGH

By NORMAN DAKER, D.P.A., A.C.I.S., F.I.P.A., F.R. Econ. S., deputy clerk and accountant, Ware, U.D.C.

DR. ROBSON'S proposals are somewhat surprising to those students who have read his book, "Development of Local Government."

Apparently his latest scheme contemplates a system similar to the present one but on a much wider basis. There are to be minor authorities with specified functions and regional authorities with both executive and co-ordinating functions.

In his earlier work, Dr. Robson emphasised the need for a single authority in each area, subject to a form of compulsory co-operation in certain spheres. His ideas were then based upon the fact that different functions required different areas. The best area for water supply might not coincide with the best area for drainage. In his latest article, however, he would allot both of these functions to the regional authority.

In his book, I believe, he has also proposed that towns with a certain population and with a proved standard of administration should be the authorities for all functions within their areas, on the county borough basis, and that elsewhere the county councils should be the authorities, also for all functions. Co-operation and joint action was to be on a compulsory basis, at the instance of a higher authority.

No one will deny that the present areas, with their impecunious authorities, are unsatisfactory. The war has emphasised the difficulties inherent in the present local government system, as a few examples will show.

Under the Government evacuation scheme, the reception authorities are the borough, urban, and rural district councils (apart from certain county boroughs). Most of these authorities are not education or maternity and child welfare authorities, and few of the councils realised the social implications of such a scheme, while many had no trained social workers. Consequently, the work in the reception areas has often been carried out largely by overworked staffs and voluntary workers.

Food control committees have been set up in most local government areas, though a few have combined for the purpose. The clerk of the authority has been appointed food executive officer in most cases, but it is well known that he is able to exercise nominal control only, the food offices being managed by "chief assistants." In the small country towns, there are often two food offices, each with its own staff, one for the borough or urban district, and one for the adjoining rural district. This has caused much confusion among the public. A better solution, I suggest,

would have been to have set up one food office, covering both areas, with a whole-time food executive officer.

The county council is the "scheme-making" authority for air raid precautions outside the larger towns, but it usually delegates most of the work to the minor authorities. In consequence, the borough or district councils have to submit proposals to the county, which in turn submits them to the regional commissioner's office, which may have to submit them to Whitehall. Any queries from the latter eventually find their way to the districts after considerable delay, and presumably the replies take the same lengthy route back to Whitehall. The financial arrangements in this complicated system can be imagined. The districts claim part of their expenditure in full from the county, and part from the Home Office.

Fire precaution schemes appear to be far more satisfactory. District and borough councils are the fire authorities, and co-ordination and co-operation is secured by the Home Office. Effective mutual assistance schemes have been prepared, and the absence of the county council has made administration far easier than is the case with general precautions.

To return to Dr. Robson's proposals, and as an alternative thereto, I suggest that the country should be divided up into the following administrative areas:

1. Boroughs, comprising present county boroughs, and (if the population and rateable value are above figures to be determined—say, 30,000 and £200,000 respectively) non-county boroughs and urban districts.

2. Districts, which would consist of wide rural areas including within their boundaries the smaller urban districts and boroughs not falling within category 1 above.

Each of these authorities would be the authority for every function within its area,

WHITEHALL MUST

By B. A. EDMONDS, Hon. Secretary, Salop County Branch.

THE question of local government administration and what reform is required to meet the demands of the service *after the war* should be exercising the minds of all officers today. It is obvious that far-reaching social reforms and measures requiring local government administration are likely to be adopted by the Government of the future. I hope that NALGO will be ready to assist and will be given the opportunity of being heard by the responsible body appointed to formulate the Government's proposals.

I support the criticism that what has been

subject to the power of a regional council to compel co-operation for certain functions. Some of the joint bodies need only advisory powers, but others would have to be given complete executive powers.

Dr. Robson's suggested personnel commissions deserve the widest possible support. The present system of recruitment (if it can be called a system) leaves much to be desired. Many authorities fail to realise that every junior should be regarded as a potential chief officer. Subject to notable exceptions, present standards of efficiency are due entirely to the efforts of the officers and their associations, and little assistance or encouragement has been forthcoming from the authorities. The Association of Municipal Corporations has declined to take part in the central advisory committee recently set up.

One point not mentioned by Dr. Robson in his article,* but dealt with at some length in his book, is the question of qualifications for chief officers. Enough emphasis is not laid on the need for administrative ability. As Sir Gwilym Gibbon has pointed out, an expert may be a good administrator, but that is not because he is an expert. In many authorities, relations between chief officers are far from good, and I believe that friction would be avoided if authorities realised that the efficient running of a department calls for more than a specialised knowledge of law, engineering, medicine, or accountancy. Chief officers must learn to know the limits of their own jurisdiction, and to appreciate that other officers' jobs are not unimportant. How can the authority function effectively as a unit if chief officers will not work together to that end? The present position is neatly summed up (as far as many authorities are concerned) in the following remark of Sir Gwilym Gibbon: "Experts . . . are apt to see through a microscope those matters which are their concern and through the wrong end of a telescope those which are not."

CONSULT OFFICERS

found wanting in local government administration for war purposes—such as civil defence—and the abnormal conditions prevailing in time of war, do not give any indication of the remedy required for improving the local government service *in times of peace*. While one would be foolish to contend that no fault can be found with the administration of local government, or the carrying out of civil defence schemes and other war measures, it has been publicly acknowledged by Government officials and persons best able to judge, namely, the Ministers of Health and Home Security and the Regional Commissioners, that, in spite of all the difficulties, and even in the areas where the Blitzkrieg has been most intense, the local government officer has displayed the same qualities that have always marked the British front-line soldier, and local government administration has been equal to the occasion.

With some timidity, I suggest that the first stage in improving local government and local government administration should be the development of a better relationship between Government departments and local authorities, and the encouragement among Government officials of closer regard for the views and experience of local government officers.

I think there is general agreement on the necessity and advisability of enlarging the areas of certain local authorities, and I suggest that the proper course to secure this is to continue the review of county districts provided by Section 146 of the Local Government Act, 1933. This should be dealt with before proceeding to regional administration for local government purposes.

*Letters commenting on Dr. Robson's article are on page 63.

OFFICERS AND COUNCILS OPPOSE REFORM

By a London Education Clerk.

A PROPORTION of officers and amateur personnel will resent Dr. Robson's efforts to arouse us before it is too late. Some have been so conditioned by the *status quo* imposed by statute, government circulars, and the doctrine of *ultra vires*, that a wider view of the interaction and interference of functions performed by the numerous self-contained local authorities is denied them. The horse, in time, appreciates the bit, and sand must be a comfort to the head of the ostrich.

Other opposition will arise from *ad hoc* authorities, especially when it has been realised that some of their officers hold office by virtue of the maze of their uncoordinated activities, and the lack of system existing between different *ad hoc* bodies and the numbers of local authorities touched by their activities.

If anything can be more formidable than the indifference of the electorate, officers, and

amateur personnel of local authorities, it will be the opposition offered by such bodies as the City Corporation, whose motive will be the retention of privilege, and whose standards are in a strait-jacket of tradition. The London sewer may be overloaded, neighbouring boroughs may feel the gross injustice of inequitable rating, but the City Corporation will continue to remain indifferent to the needs of regional government in London so long as its members may strut through meaningless ceremonial and eat turtle soup from the golden dinner service.

I have no doubt that some vested interests would intervene, if necessary, via the popular press, and we should prepare ourselves for "The City Corporation helps in the fight for freedom" or a label bearing "The present democratic system" affixed to a photograph of the Lord Mayor's procession. The problem of the homeless and our refugees may be referred back to Hitler, may it not?

WHERE the MONEY GOES

The result of the Ministry of Labour enquiry—in which some NALGO members took part—into expenditure of working-class families has recently been published. Here, an economist describes its principal findings.

THE main object of the enquiry into the weekly expenditure of working-class households, held by the Ministry of Labour in 1937-38, was to provide material for revising the basis of the official cost of living index. This index was instituted in 1914 in order to provide a month-by-month indication of the cost of maintaining the standard of living of working-class families at that date, and 1914 is the base year for the figures, which are published every month in the "Ministry of Labour Gazette." The material used for selecting the list of items to be included in the index, and the relative importance to be assigned to each, dates back ten years earlier still, however. In 1904, the Board of Trade had collected 1,944 working-class family budgets, and it was decided that the results of this enquiry would serve as a basis for "weighting" the index of 1914. The validity of this decision was confirmed, incidentally, by the Sumner Cost of Living Committee of 1918, which reported that it was fairly certain that between 1904 and 1914 no considerable changes had taken place in the mode or standard of living.

Nevertheless, by 1918 it is probable that important changes had taken place—and by 1936 very great changes. By then, the official index figure had been subjected to a great deal of criticism—much of it justified, but some, it must be said, seriously misinformed. At long last, the Ministry announced that an enquiry would be undertaken to ascertain what changes should be made in the items included and in the weighting used in calculating the index figure. The enquiry would, at the same time, provide information as to the kinds and amounts of food purchased: this information would be of great value to health departments in studying problems of nutrition. This was the second object of the enquiry, which was made in the following autumn and in three subsequent weeks at quarterly intervals; the first results have recently been published.

More than 19,000 households supplied effective budgets for the four weeks, but the results so far published relate only to those of industrial, commercial, and clerical workers, numbering 8,905. This number is just about what the Ministry aimed at, and is obviously a large enough sample for the purpose.

It is found that the average "working-class" family (meaning by this the family of a manual worker or a non-manual worker whose salary did not exceed £250 a year) consisted of 3½ persons, 1½ of whom were earners, lived in four rooms—including the kitchen, but not scullery, bathroom, etc.—and spent about 85s. a week. Less than half of this, 34s. 1d., went on food. Rent or purchase instalments, plus rates, etc., accounted for 10s. 10d., clothes for 8s. 1d., fuel and light for 6s. 5d., and other items for 25s. 7d.

Some surprise has been expressed at the smallness of the rent or purchase instalment figure, but it must be remembered that this is a net figure, arrived at after deducting any rent received for rooms sub-let. Many households have a lodger, and this will bring down the average expenditure appreciably.

Of the 34s. 1d. spent on food, meat accounted for 6s. 2½d., bacon and ham for 1s. 11d., and fish, including fried fish and chips, for 1s. 4½d. Bread cost 2s. 8½d., flour 10d., cakes, buns, pastries, and biscuits 1s. 6½d., and oatmeal, breakfast cereals, rice, sago, tapioca, etc., 3½d. These items came to 14s. 10½d.

Three shillings and three-farthings was spent on fresh milk, and 6d. on other kinds of milk, 2s. 5½d. on butter, 4½d. on margarine, 6½d. on lard, suet, dripping and other cooking fats, and 8½d. on cheese. These items total 7s. 7½d.

Eggs cost 1s. 10½d., tea 1s. 7½d., coffee, cocoa, etc., only 2½d., sugar 1s. 0½d., jam, marmalade, syrup, and honey 7½d. These items total 5s. 4½d.

Vegetables came to 2s. 5½d., of which 1s. 1½d. was for potatoes, and 1s. 4½d. for all other vegetables; apples, oranges and bananas accounted for 1½d., and other fruit and nuts for 10½d. The total of these items was 4s. 3½d.

The balance is made up by "meals away from home" (1s. 1½d.), and "other food" (9½d.).

The enquiry shows that 80 per cent. of the households were renting their dwellings, 18 per cent. owned or were buying them, and 2 per cent. were provided with dwellings rent-free.



"Yes, we are having to run on a skeleton staff, these days."

The average net cost of housing for the renters was 10s. 8d., and for the owners or buyers 12s. 9d. But this tells us nothing about the relative total costs of renting and buying, since the figures are in net terms and one group may have had more lodgers, on average, than the other. Furthermore, some of the "owners or buyers," but how many it is not stated, will not have been making purchase instalments. And again, there is the question of repairs to be borne in mind.

The average household expenditure on clothing during the weeks in which the main enquiry was held came to 9s. 4d. But it was felt when the enquiry was being planned that, since clothing expenditure is irregular, it would be advisable to obtain weekly figures for a complete year from a representative selection of the households. This special enquiry provided the rather lower figure of 8s. 1d.

Of the total of 6s. 5d. for fuel and light, expenditure on coal and coke averaged 3s. 3d., on gas 1s. 5½d., on electricity 1½d., and on firewood, oil, candles and matches 8½d.

"Other items," for which a weight of 4 per cent. is provided in the existing cost of living index, accounted in fact for about 30 per cent. of expenditure. The following table shows the average weekly expenditure on some of the main "other items":

	s.	d.
Soap, soda, etc.	1	1½
Household equipment	2	11½
Tobacco and cigarettes	2	6½
Travelling	2	3
Newspapers, etc.	1	0
Entertainments	1	4½
Laundry	6	1
Hairdressing, etc.	6	1
Doctor, dentist, etc.	1	8
National Health, Pensions, and Unemployment Insurance	2	0½

Other insurances	s.	d.
Trade Union subscriptions	1	4½

This account for just under £1 out of the 25s. 7d. The full list is too long to reproduce.

The results of this enquiry provide very valuable information, and most revealing information in several places, as to the nutrition and general standard of living of the members of the ordinary household. They are valuable both as an indication of the conditions prevailing today (or rather, shortly before the war) and as a measure of the progress made in the past generation. Unfortunately, the material collected on nutrition was not as good as it might have been. A large proportion of the budgets received did not give sufficiently exact information as to quantities bought, except for certain principal foods, to afford a satisfactory basis for arriving at general averages.

The making of a new index is another stage in the process. It is not practicable just to put all the expenditures into percentages, use these as "weights," and collect prices for the several hundred items from now on. A number of items are not readily "priceable," on others the total expenditure is too small to worry about, for a third group there are difficulties in choosing a representative quality or qualities, and many other technical questions have to be solved before a revised index can be worked out. It is possible that this work will not be undertaken during the war, or even at all. A Ministry of Labour official is reported to have said: "It is impossible to say now whether the figures will be used. A decision will be taken after reports on the budgets of agricultural families and other sections of the public." Owing to rationing, increased taxation, and other wartime conditions, the results of the 1937-38 enquiry are already out of accord with the facts of today. But, manifestly, they are not so out of accord as are the results of a 1904 enquiry. It is to be hoped, therefore, that if it is impracticable, or reckoned not worth while, to carry out a revision during the war, it should be done as soon afterwards as is possible.

Even if this necessitates a fresh enquiry, as it may do if living habits change greatly, the 1937-38 enquiry will by no means be wasted. Its results give an invaluable conspectus of conditions before the present war. When peace comes it will thus be easy to find out how far habits have changed; it will be possible, within limits, to assess how far they are likely to change back again, how far it will be practicable to enable them to change back, or to encourage a trend no longer dictated by the necessities of war. For post-war planning purposes, it would be unfortunate indeed if there existed no official record of the pre-war consuming habits of the people.

Education Work Goes On

DESPITE present conditions, the wide-awake local government officer still realises the need for study, both to increase his efficiency and to enable him to secure those professional and technical qualifications that will undoubtedly be of great benefit to him in his career after the war.

The NALGO Correspondence Institute is maintaining its recognised high standard of tuition and is at present coaching some 500 students. Since the war began, more than 250 new students have enrolled.

Fees are reduced to a minimum and the well-stocked Lending Library enables members to obtain books for study on long-term loans for a small charge.

The NALGO Examinations are still being held, and the syllabus has recently been revised to include wartime legislation and other topical material.

To ensure that members shall not forgo or be delayed in securing essential qualifications through lack of funds, the Association is still ready to consider the granting of Loans for Educational Purposes to individual members.

BRANCH'S WAR SAVINGS TRIUMPH

When a South London borough launched its War Weapons Week with the aim of raising £40,000, to buy two destroyers, the local branch of NALGO threw all its energies to the campaign. Here is the story of how it helped to **SAVE FOR VICTORY**

It was just a short note from the Mayor, received by the branch secretary three weeks before the launching of War Weapons Week. The executive committee had already held its monthly meeting, so the letter was placed before the Whitleyism and service conditions sub-committee, which happened to be meeting on the day it was received. What did it matter if the Mayor's request for the co-operation of the staff in raising £40,000 for the purchase of two destroyers did go to the wrong sub-committee? After all, public relations is a staff matter directly affecting service conditions in the long run.

By the very next evening, a staff War Weapons Week Savings Campaign Committee had been formed. It was composed of members of the executive, departmental savings groups secretaries, and volunteers who were prepared, in one way or another, to get down to a job of work. The branch pledged itself to raise £1,000 in savings—apart from its members alone, but from the world at large. How modest was the goal as seen at the end of the week, when it was found that the branch had, in fact, raised £20,800!

The campaign was conducted along two main lines of approach—an internal appeal for increased saving by the staff and their friends, involving all departments including A.R.P. personnel and workmen; and an external contact with the public in concert with the big stores and outside organisations.

Internally, a system of national savings by way of deductions from wages and salaries was already in operation; so, too, was the departmental group savings scheme. Thus, all that was necessary was a gigantic push to induce still more saving through those channels. To that end, every member of the staff was urged to redouble his efforts, to save during War Weapons Week. Principal officers were called upon to lead their departments in lending. The production staff of the branch magazine brought out a sixteen-page booklet—a booklet, so bullying and powerfully phrased that no reader dared but take an active part in one direction or another in helping to raise national savings. One member of the staff canvassed a cheque for £2,000.

A huge competition for savings certificates was floated. The demand for tickets was so great that it was necessary to have three reprints, the final issue resulting at twenty-five thousand. Over £500 was raised in this way. A surprising number of private and departmental competitions, auctions and raffles were sponsored by individual members of the staff. Onions, for instance, appeared from nowhere, and in one department nine onions brought nearly £9. "Petty cash savings groups" were formed on the spot when cashiers paid out. All of this represented the staff's personal effort. It produced no less than £15,550.

The public contact took the form of a gun turret national savings kiosk and a war exhibition. The principal of the School of Art designed a model of a destroyer's gun turret, which was reproduced in full size by members of the estates repairs department, and erected on a commanding site outside premises recently vacated by the rate collection department. The town was not lacking in modern war "trophies," such as contributions from the Luftwaffe (rendered harmless by B.D.S.); model aeroplanes and ships made by members of the staff; souvenirs of bomb damage, such as specimens of blitzed telephone cables (lent by the Post Office); glass which had once been

6183 SAVINGS GROUPS

How local authorities have helped the war savings movement is shown by the following figures of groups formed on March 31, 1940, on June 30, 1940 (when the local Authorities Advisory Committee for National Savings was formed) and on January 31, 1941.

	March 1940	June 1940	Jan. 1941
County Councils	238	279	636
County Boroughs and Boroughs	1307	1742	4007
Urban Districts	346	488	1139
Rural Districts	109	166	401

One of the most active local authorities in the country is Norfolk C.C., where 91 per cent of the officers are members of the savings group. Other good percentages are Denbighshire C.C., 84; Northants C.C., 79; Cornwall C.C., 72; Dudley C.B., 89; Bournemouth C.B., 85; Salford C.B., 77; and Gateshead C.B., 75.

windows, reduced to cobra-like sinuosity by the heat of fires; exhibits arranged by the A.F.S.; and hosts of war-photographs lent by the Ministry of Information and arranged by the staff of the libraries department. During the week, more than 10,300 people visited the exhibition and kiosk.

HOW OFFICERS CAN HELP THE CAMPAIGN

By **ARNOLD HECKLE**, Honorary Secretary, Wolverhampton Savings Committee

EVERYONE must have been impressed by the success of the national savings movement during the first year of the war finance campaign. To have raised £475,000,000 on loan is a colossal feat, and all those connected with the movement must greatly admire our president, Lord Kindersley, without whose inspiration and initiative this success might not have been possible. Tribute is also due to the administrative staffs of the movement.

Local Government has played a big part in the work of the movement, and I think Lord Kindersley would agree that, without the influence and help of local authorities, its success would not have been so great. Most local savings committees have a member of the local authority as chairman, and a local government officer as honorary secretary. Before the war, the position of honorary secretary was almost a sinecure, but it has since developed into practically a full-time job, though it still has to be sandwiched in between the other duties of the officer concerned.

One of the most astounding things about the movement is the amount of voluntary work which is given by so many people. I doubt if in any other country in the world so much voluntary help could be obtained to operate what is virtually a government department.

While there must be both black spots and bright spots, the average savings, on the whole, have been remarkably consistent. This has been especially noticeable in the war weapons weeks, where the average of £7 to £8 a head of population has been steadily maintained. The organization of war weapons weeks has thrown a particularly heavy strain on honorary secretaries, but with the approval and support of their authorities, they have put their backs into it and helped to produce most impressive results.

The starting of street groups has, in many towns, also brought the part played by local government into prominence. In Wolverhampton, we have a savings committee in each ward of the borough. This is usually

The latter was manned from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. daily by the wives, friends, and sweethearts of the staff. The proceeds from admission charges reached £110 which was given to the Mayor's civil defence workers' comforts fund.

Twice daily, a "war weapons week home service news," was "broadcast" from the exhibition, and members of the staff serving in the Forces, home on leave, gave broadcast accounts of their experiences and appealed for savings. The response was astonishing.

One member of the public was so intrigued by the work of the branch for the campaign that he immediately wrote out a cheque for £375 to buy the maximum holding of 500 units of certificates. An old lady was so impressed by the brightness of the exhibition and the charming way in which a young lady member of the staff conducted her round that she paid 10/- for admission, instead of 3d.

The exhibition acted as a draw to the national savings kiosk which, on the final Saturday afternoon, was so busy that volunteers had to be recruited from dancers at a staff tête dantsant held at the invitation of the Mayor in the council chamber.

The kiosk raised £5,250. In total, therefore, the staff campaigns committee raised £20,800 towards the town's total savings for the week of just over one million pounds.

By the way, the branch concerned was Croydon. N. H. R.

presided over by a representative of the council for that ward, and the honorary secretary is usually a member of NALGO. Through these ward committees, more than 170 street savings groups have already been formed, besides many other groups in shops, works, and social organizations. Once under way, they go on producing savings steadily week after week, the cumulative effect of which must be of considerable value to the movement, since these are real savings, and not merely money changed from one investment to another; and street groups spread rapidly.

Local government has played a further part in this district through the inauguration of an inter-borough savings competition for monthly savings, five neighbouring towns competing for a challenge trophy presented by the Mayor of Wolverhampton. This has undoubtedly helped to encourage a keen competitive spirit, besides gaining much valuable publicity in the press.

All this is useful, but most honorary secretaries must be asking, "Is it enough? Is it still possible for the honorary secretary to plan and organize to produce the maximum amount of savings from his area?" I feel, that, as yet, we have only touched the fringe of real saving. People are still not practising the self-denial which they ought—and this particularly applies to those who are earning much more money than they did in peacetime.

I consider that the National Savings Committee must be prepared to spend more money locally. It seems to me essential to have a local headquarters of the movement in every large town, where group secretaries can get their supplies, and where accurate information can speedily be given. This does not mean that the services of the honorary secretary should be dispensed with; he will always be needed in co-ordinating the various local efforts, and maintaining the essential link between local government and the national savings movement. But to get the best results he must be given greater support and, from what I hear, this is now in the mind of the national savings committee.

This inside story of the transformation of Sheffield's luxurious City Hall into a municipal restaurant, supplying 3-course meals at 8d. a head, will be of interest to many officers who are to-day having to tackle the problems of communal feeding.

"COMMUNAL Feeding Centre" and "Community Kitchen," as Mr. Priestley observed in a recent broadcast, are titles which conjure up unpleasant mental pictures of long queues, plain deal tables, and dirty dixies. Actually, local government can feed the people cheaply, comfortably, and cleanly—even luxuriously, as Sheffield has proved.

In Sheffield, the site chosen for the first municipal restaurant (deliberately so named) was the ballroom of the City Hall, a beautifully panelled and frescoed room skirted on three sides by small halls. It is approached by entrances separate from those serving the remainder of this half-million-pound modern building, and is thirty feet below ground level.

After the severe air raids on the city in mid-December, city workers attempting to resume their normal work under trying conditions were unable for several days to buy a mid-day meal, destruction of restaurants and interruption of gas and water supplies having put all except two of the numerous catering establishments out of action. This was a real hardship in December weather, especially since many people were unable to obtain even packed cold lunches. To make matters worse, many workers were faring no better at home, on account of failure of one or other of the essential domestic services.

In these circumstances, the emergency committee, under the chairmanship of Alderman (then Councillor) W. Asbury, J.P., determined to put the long-debated question of communal feeding to a practical test. Agreed that the occasion was not one for half-measures, they boldly decided to use the City Hall ballroom, and to find somewhere to cook the food to be consumed there, since the City Hall itself had no cooking apparatus and no room where it could be installed. Within forty-eight hours of the decision to open the restaurant, the first meals were being served—an advertisement in the local press, a radio announcement, and loudspeaker vans having previously proclaimed the good news.

Looking back now, seven weeks later, and admitting that even now the organisation and equipment are not one hundred per cent what those responsible would wish, the first few days appear as a near-miracle with a Heath Robinson flavour. Most of the food was transported in dustbins—new, of course—and cooked on a couple of ordinary domestic cookers. By some means, the presiding magicians coaxed about 650 meals per day from equipment which could hardly be expected to provide 100. Timely aid was forthcoming from the Institution kitchens at Fir Vale and a school kitchen. One particularly recalls a hectic rush round the city less than an hour before the restaurant was due to open, buying trays for the cafeteria service, and almost fighting a way through the first queue with a cash register!

Nevertheless, the first meal was served, to the accompaniment of amplified gramophone records (Mr. Priestley, please note the date—December 24). Flowers decked the long tables covered with (borrowed) tablecloths. Behold!—the Municipal Restaurant.

From that improvised beginning is now developing an ordered scheme of perimeter cooking depots in adapted schools, equipped with solid fuel cookers and emergency water supplies, capable of producing up to 3,500 meals a day and of functioning independently of the normal domestic services. Two of these cooking depots are already at work. Associated with them will be a chain of municipal restaurants, of which three are already open—the City Hall and two others, some distance from the city centre.

These three restaurants are supplying between 3,500 and 4,000 lunches, plus about 1,500 sandwich snacks, each day, six days a week. The City Hall is also open on Sunday. Prices are very modest—a penny for soup, fivepence for meat and two vegetables, twopenny for sweet—a total of eightpence, with a



"Well, nobody need worry when I'm fire-watching."

cup of tea a penny extra. The first two restaurants established were staffed by paid workers, but in the latest venture voluntary help supplied under the auspices of the Women's Voluntary Services is being utilised. The City Hall employs about 90 workers; the others about 30 each. No service is provided at table.

WHY DOES THE PUBLIC DISLIKE US SO?

—asks G. W. VICKERY

IT is now nearly three years since I started my first job, as a junior clerk in the borough treasurer's department of a Metropolitan borough council. At first I was excited at the prospect. I imagined that town halls were progressive organisations, with elaborate "filing-systems" (whatever they were), and modern office equipment. I was doomed to disappointment. The "atmosphere" of the office was one of unbelievable slowness. The task of writing seemingly never-ending piles of demand notes grew monotonous, and I feared that the job would develop into daily routine, with few interesting incidents to provide relief.

Then I began to answer queries at a counter. It gave me a thrill to stand there and answer all sorts of questions, ridiculous and otherwise, from all sorts of people. Here, something else became apparent—and it is even more apparent after three years. That is that the public have a marked dislike for the staff at a town hall.

The reason has, I think, been supplied when I have listened to colleagues answering other inquirers when I have been within earshot. It seems that the officer sticks too much to the "copy-book." He usually brings into play such phrases as "on the instructions of the council," and "the consent of the appropriate committee."

I do not suggest that the officer should not carry out his duty rigidly, but I do feel that a more friendly and casual—if that is the right word—explanation of the ratepayer's query is better than a barrage of superfluous oratory delivered in a melancholy monotone. It may be that the inquirer may wish to relate her experiences in last night's air raid, or give a detailed account of her family's activities. This, though irrelevant, is, after all, typical of English folk, and a patient hearing of these

An item of particular interest to N.A.L.G.O members is that the Sheffield Municipal Officers' Guild orchestra—itsself a comparatively new but very successful venture—plays at the City Hall restaurant throughout the Sunday lunch period, and, judging by the insistent applause, its efforts are fully appreciated by the diners.

As for the actual operation of the restaurants, the counters are composed of hot-cupboards placed in a row: the City Hall has four counters, the other restaurants one each. Payment is made on entry, a ticket being delivered for a fixed price meal from one of the two cash registers. The diner takes a tray, passes the service counter where each course is dispensed by an assistant, and at the end of the counter hands over his ticket, receives the necessary cutlery, and is shown to a seat. By this method at the City Hall 850 people, the total seating capacity, have been served and seated in thirty minutes.

Circumstances so far have precluded any attempt at detailed costing, but it can at least be said that, under the right conditions, meals at the prices charged can be supplied without incurring a loss. Figures extracted for one of the smaller restaurants prove this conclusively, and the City Hall restaurant also can pay its way, given certain conditions.

A venture so unusual in conception and so bold in execution could scarcely have failed to attract the attention of distinguished visitors to the city. The King and Queen, the Princess Royal and Lord Harewood, Mr. Arthur Greenwood, M.P., and Mr. A. V. Alexander, First Lord of the Admiralty (a Sheffield M.P.), have all examined the City Hall restaurant and voiced their admiration. One visit, however, which was awaited with keen interest by the public assistance officer (Mr. W. Stansfield) and the executive of the restaurant, was that of Mr. Waygood, Lord Woolton's principal assistant. When he also was obviously impressed by the arrangements—and said so—a considerable load was lifted from the minds of several anxious men and women!

anecdotes may simplify the ultimate settlement of a difficult matter, including the most difficult matter—extracting money for rates from a would-be non-payer! I therefore suggest that we try to thaw the frozen attitude of the public towards the service by showing them that we, like they, have the qualities—so necessary now—of sympathy, patience, and willingness to go to greater lengths to meet their needs. However, I honestly believe that, since the war, more people are beginning to realise that much good work is being done in local government offices, and that officers are ready to help them on a generous scale wherever possible.

One happy feature of local government life which has appealed to me is the harmony and friendliness which exists among the staff. Officers are unusually reluctant to complain about things which are really worth complaining about—possibly this accounts, at least partly, for the slowness and lack of adventurous spirit of the majority. Most seem to take things lying down. If old methods are used, they are seldom replaced by new. There seems to be a marked hesitancy to attempt new methods and introduce new ideas. However, there certainly are go-ahead people in the service, and given the necessary opportunities, these could do much to improve existing weaknesses. Perhaps a little tactful pressure by the staff would bring about some welcome changes.

In spite of these little faults, local government has taught me a great deal, and if I have helped to solve the problems of some of my fellow citizens, or to relieve the inconvenience and hardships which many of them have suffered, then I am satisfied. I am convinced that one or two major changes in organisation will come, and with the go-ahead, adventurous spirit of the younger officers of the service, much will be added to its reputation.

WARNING CALLS BY HOUSE PHONE

Dr. C. G. MILLMAN, Deputy Medical Superintendent, and P. WHITTINGHAM, Charge Engineer, Cell Barnes Colony and E.M.S. Hospital, St. Albans.

THE institution in which the apparatus to be described is installed, is of the "villa" type, comprising ten ward blocks and a variety of other buildings including kitchen, laundry, workshops, administrative offices, and private residences spread over more than 20 acres.

The device was installed in July, 1939, to meet two needs. In peace time, much difficulty was experienced in locating senior officers whose duties took them to various parts of the colony at different times. With the imminence of war, an alternative fire alarm system had to be devised, since the siren could not be used; moreover, it was thought that air-raid sirens would probably be inaudible in wards full of noisy children or workshops with mechanical noise, so that air-raid signals would have to be relayed to each ward.

It was considered that the desired results—sending call signals to certain areas and alarm signals throughout the colony—could most economically be attained by utilising the wiring of the house telephones. In this way, signals could reach all necessary points, 69 in number. An instrument was produced to our specification by Strand Electric Ltd., which not only meets these requirements but would automatically bring any future telephone lines into the signal system. This method, with minor modifications to suit individual cases, would provide a satisfactory and inexpensive method of meeting the needs of many public and commercial institutions, and would solve the problem of synchronising public air-raid warnings.

The telephone exchange already in use is of the automatic type and the ringing impulse is produced by an interruptor giving rings of the second's duration at two-second intervals. This was considered, and experience has proved, that a number of signals consisting of various combinations of long and short rings would be easily distinguishable from the ordinary telephone call and from each other.

Our instrument gives the following signals. The terms "dot" and "dash" are used for convenience only and are not intended to imply resemblance to the dots and dashes of the morse code.)

Warning Signals.

Dots in rapid succession for one minute—air-raid alert.

Continuous ring for one minute—air-raid all clear.

(Similar signals sent out for 10-15 seconds signify a "local danger warning" within an alert and its cancellation.)

Alternating dots and dashes for one minute—fire.

Call Signals.

These all consist of groups of sounds sent out four times at intervals of one second.

Two dots—medical officer.

Two dashes—engineer.

Three dots—first head nurse.

Dot, dot, dash—second head nurse.

These signals were selected to suit local conditions; the instrument is adjustable and any reasonable combination of dots and dashes may be obtained.

The essentials of the device are two-way multiple pole switches whereby groups of outgoing lines are disconnected from the telephone exchange and connected to an apparatus for sending the various signals. This consists of a rotary make-and-break driven by a small motor run from the mains. On discs attached to the spindle of this motor are mounted detachable cams; on rotation of the spindle, these cams, which are of two sizes (for sending "dots" and "dashes" respectively and whose spacing is capable of infinite variation) actuate rocking mercury switches. The current made and broken by these mer-

cury switches is provided by a step-down transformer from the mains and the voltage is arranged to suit the windings of the telephone bells. A switch is provided to bring each signal into circuit and each switch is so connected as to start the motor. A pilot light is provided so that the operator can avoid connecting or disconnecting the telephone lines in the middle of a group of impulses. For an alarm, of course, the signal is sent out without any delay.

To meet the particular requirements of this institution, the telephone lines have been bunched into five groups. By this means, each message is sent out where it is needed and private residences and certain offices are spared the annoyance of unnecessary signal calls. Thus, the same codes for medical officer, first head nurse and second head nurse can be sent either to the male side of the institution or to the female side, and would then refer to different individuals. One switch controls a small group of "neutral" telephones which may be thrown in with either the male or female side, another controls the lines to the resident firemen's telephones. For air-raid signals, all groups are thrown into circuit, for fire signals such groups as may be appropriate at the particular time of day or night.

We wish to thank Dr. Noel H. M. Burke, medical superintendent, who will gladly give any further information, for permission to publish this paper, and Mr. H. Mercer, engineer-in-charge, for his valuable assistance in the preparation of specifications.

Britain's Only Municipal Conditioning House

By HERBERT RILEY

BRADFORD corporation possesses what must be one of the most unusual municipal departments in the world—a conditioning house for the testing of the wide range of textile materials produced by manufacturers in the city.

The purpose of the conditioning house, the only one of its kind in the country, according to its regulations, is: "ascertaining and certifying the true weight, length, and condition of articles of the textile trade, commonly used in the city, and known as tops, noils, yarns and other materials and things of a similar character, and also the true weight and condition of wools, or for any other purpose

of the like nature, in order that persons, whether buyers or sellers, desirous of having any such articles tested and certified, may effect such object—on payment of reasonable charges."

Since it was opened, under powers granted in the Bradford Corporation (Various Powers) Act, 1887, the conditioning house has done business with every country in the world.

Wherever the purchaser of textile material complains of faults or alleges that the goods delivered do not conform with the original sample, he can refer the dispute to the conditioning house, which will test the material and express an authoritative opinion, accepted by customer and manufacturer alike.

When a bus company is choosing materials for covering seats, for example, the conditioning house can tell it what is the most hard-wearing, by testing how many rubs are needed to wear the pile off the fabric. It can tell a manufacturer how long a silk stocking is likely to wear without developing holes; it can even express an opinion, based on exhaustive practical tests, on the wearing qualities of the seat of a small boy's trousers! Other tests discover how different materials retain their colour and qualities when exposed to sun, sea, and air under all types of climatic conditions.

Buyers in every part of the world make use of the services of the conditioning house. By post, plane, railway, road, and canal they send goods to it for testing and report.

Wise local authorities, especially in these days of rising prices, when there is a great temptation to reduce qualities in order to keep costs down, make use of its services in testing the cloths they buy for uniforms of police, bus drivers and conductors, electricity and gas inspectors, and the like. The conditioning house certificate, bearing the common seal of the city of Bradford, is universally accepted as a guarantee that the report upon any particular material will be precise and accurate.

Fees for testing range from a few shillings to a few pounds, depending on the nature of the tests needed, but no charge at all is made for advice, which is given on any problem on the nature and quality of textile materials.

A LETTER FOR LORD HAW-HAW

"The people of Britain," German propagandists declared recently, "are covering a terror in their air-raid shelters, quaking before the German onslaughts." We commend these wishful thinkers the following letter received recently by a borough engineer:

Dear Sir,—Some time ago measurements, etc., were taken for an air raid shelter in the back yard. Neighbours who had their names taken after us have been fixed up. Do not misunderstand me; I am not thinking of myself. When a man has been in poor health for 15 years and knows full well he is in the way, what does it matter to him which way "he goes out."

Although Mrs. A— is a regular church-goer, that does not mean that old Hitler will spare her any more than I. If a person's conscience is clear, why worry? I have not been to church since I was "tied up," but that does not necessarily mean I am a bald, bold, bad bouncer, or anything like it.

I can truthfully say that I have never done anyone a bad turn in my life, but have helped and given advice to many. Of course, like most couples when they have been married 28 years, they get sick and tired of looking at the same old dial and, tempers get frayed—and, as usual, the poor old cock bird gets "the bird" in more ways than one.

Enough of that and to come to the point and my worry. I have a charming daughter (all parents think the same), aged 15, who has recently started on a business career and should go far. It is her I am thinking of. As she says (and I certainly agree), a shelter gives a feeling of security and helps to ease that "stomach" trouble which one never had.

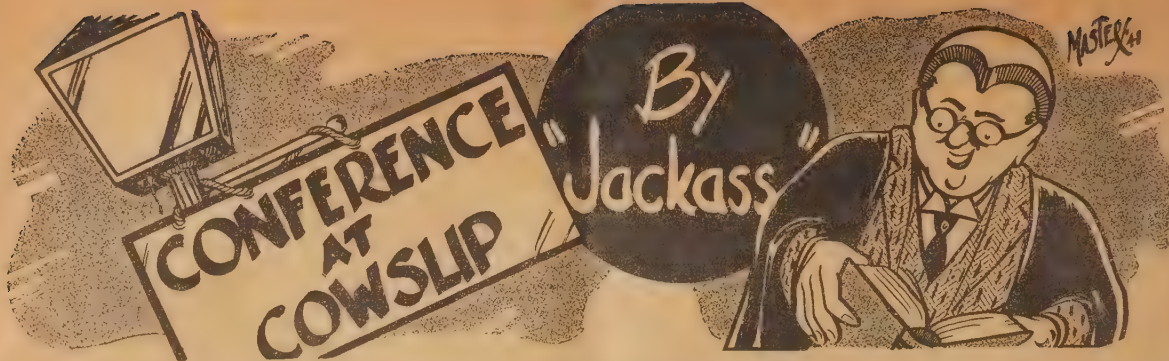
God forbid that those plodding, pale faced, wild eyed, doped with victory and doped with dope Germans should ever land on the shores of our land of hope and glory.

In conclusion, if you can do anything with regard to the necessary—what some people call "funk hole"—someone would be more than pleased.

Yours sincerely,

H. — A —.

P.S.—What I cannot understand is this—why should one N.C.O., of the German Army of 1918, be allowed to upset the whole world and cause this terrible destruction of life and property in 1940? One would almost believe that Hitler during the past nine months had had everything spiritual to aid him. Whatever the reason—he will and must go down. If one capable man in every household was provided with a shortened service rifle, etc., we could take on all comers.



MR. LANGFORD of Chelmsford, who wrote to the Editor recently protesting against the National Executive Council's decision to abandon even the pretence of control by a conference this year, is a man after my own heart. If ever his soul revolts against whatever drudgery is his particular lot at Chelmsford, we would be proud to welcome him to Much Cowslip, where he would find that staunch comradeship which exists between all men who think and write in capitals on matters of principle.

His spiritual affinity to Much Cowslip is proved by the fact that his suggestion of a conference independent of the N.E.C. was eagerly seized upon by our executive committee, which, as my regular reader (an intelligent fellow) will recall, had already registered its protest against the Council's action. At its meeting immediately following the distribution of that issue of LOCAL GOVERNMENT SERVICE containing Mr. Langford's letter, the committee galloped through the routine business at a pace which plainly indicated its desire to get to "Any other business."

Without protest, the members learned that, after toiling heroically through a difficult winter, their hours were to be lengthened just when lengthening days brought prospect of daylight use of leisure. Philosophically, they listened to the clerk's announcement that the local council, at its last meeting, had placed on record its grateful admiration of our services during and after the blitz, but regretted that no salary increases could be granted this year. Unmoved, they heard his guarded statement that, if favourable conditions obtained, there was the adumbration of a possibility that the question might arise of permitting some annual leave this year. Without criticism, they approved the negotiating committee's report that the council had once more deferred our request for the adoption of the new cost-of-living bonus award (that tiny candle in a naughty world). I almost believe that if we had announced an increase in subscription rates, it would have been endorsed without comment. Obviously, the members scorned to discuss such material factors, such vulgar problems of money and hours, lest by so doing they might delay the full-dress debate on a matter of high principle which they knew was coming.

The clerk, a man not without principles but sensible enough to disregard them whenever they are inconvenient, tried to thank the members for their attendance and close the meeting without asking for "Any other business." He failed by about four syllables to get it all out before fifteen members were on their feet to call his attention to the omission. Tut-tutting his absent-mindedness, he had to call the item, and Blatherpatch rose at once with all the confidence of a man who knows he is speaking for and not to his audience.

He referred bitterly to the despotic system of control under which our beloved association was groaning. Some argument followed on a point of order as to whether an association could be said to groan, but the clerk eventually

ruled that if a majority of the members groaned, they might collectively be described as a groaning association. Blatherpatch continued. He sighed for the fluency of a Dingle Foot to do justice to the sanctity of democratic practices, and for the invective of a Robespierre to denounce those who had done democracy such grievous wrong. Blood, toil, tears, and sweat? . . . yes! Slavery? . . . a thousand times no! (Some disorder while the back-benchers sang the chorus of "No, no! A thousand times no!") He demanded that Much Cowslip, which had never deviated one inch, iota, jot, or tittle from the basic principles of democracy, should summon a conference, and thereby demonstrate its determination to maintain, even in the teeth of the National Executive Council, those principles of free speech and majority control for which our nation was at that very moment locked in a deadly struggle with an implacable foe (loud and frenzied cheering).

MacSwiffle, whose prosaic style contrasted well with Blatherpatch's emotional fervour, enumerated and answered (to his own satisfaction at least) the difficulties of holding a conference. He suggested that there was one principle only at stake—whether those who paid the piper were entitled to a delegate assembly, on however small a scale, at which to call the tune. He had no doubt of their opinion.

Nor had the clerk and, like the seasoned campaigner he is, he made no attempt to stem the irresistible but contented himself with influencing them to confine the conference to those authorities within reasonable reach of Much Cowslip. Finally, the last Sunday in February was chosen as the appointed day, and I sent invitations to the surrounding branches, including Buttercup Magna and Dandelion Parva.

Among the delegates, I recognised several I had last seen at Torquay. Together we wandered unhappily up and down our main

street, murmuring "Happy days—yes, happy days," and clothing with recollected palms the dreary vista behind the local gasworks. Together we stumbled forlornly through the snow and slush into the "Lamb and Lion" to warm our frozen toes with bottled sunshine. Though I had hung yellow cards on both our gaslamps, "To the Cowslip Conference," and had arranged a welcome tour round the sewage disposal works, somehow things were not the same.

The conference itself, however, was an immense success—so realistic that, with eyes half-closed, I could almost hear "Brrroddie Glesga" and intricate Welsh metaphors echoing round the room.

The clerk presided and occupied an hour pleasantly by reading aloud to us the first five chapters of "Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire" which, for all its age, was topical and saved him the trouble of preparing a presidential address. Not one of the delegates noticed the difference, and a gentleman from Buttercup Magna entertained us pleasantly for a further half-hour with humorous anecdotes in moving a vote of thanks for the president's inspiring address.

The first item on the agenda was from Buttercup Magna, calling attention to the unsatisfactory state of the Benevolent and Orphan Fund finances and suggesting that where income did not equal expenditure, we must increase one or decrease the other. Obviously, the conference thought this a rather crude solution, and an amendment was carried expressing the firm conviction that local government officers would never allow the work of the Fund to be hampered by lack of money, and referring the whole matter to the National Executive Council. After which, we adjourned for a lunch provided by Much Cowslip council—whose members were very annoyed about it when they found out later.

After lunch, we had a long and spirited debate on an amendment to substitute "and" for "but" in a motion which read, "That this conference deplores the provision of municipal communal feeding centres, but would welcome the introduction of cosy corporation cafes." Feeling ran high on this, and eventually I accepted the amendment to restore good humour. It didn't matter very much, because when put as a substantive motion it was heavily defeated, for no apparent reason.

Unfortunately, the remaining four hundred and seventy-three items on the agenda, including affiliation to the T.U.C., war bonuses, national scales of salaries, and other quite important problems, had to be dealt with rather quickly in the last hour of the time available. So we referred them all to the National Executive Council, with power to act.

Blatherpatch didn't like this, but I managed to convince him that it is one thing to tell the N.E.C. to do as they wish—after all, every conference does that—and quite another for them to announce that they are going to do as they wish whether we like it or not. The one, as Mr. Langford would write, is DEMOCRACY; the other is AUTOOCRACY.



"Stumbled forlornly to the 'Lamb and Lion'"

NALGO ROLL OF HONOUR

61

Military KILLED

ifford, Pte. C. A. S., Devon Regt., borough
surer's dept., Torquay. (Previously re-
ed missing. Now confirmed that he lost
life in the "Arandora Star.")
arler, Pilot-Offr. W. T., R.A.F., 41, P.A.
t., Essex C.C. Killed in action.
ustace, F. S., Ealing. Killed in action.
Gerrie, Gnr. J. A., R.A., public assistance
t., Aberdeen. Died in hospital in Belgium.
lawker, Sgt. Pilot L. A. T., R.A.F., 20,
Thomas R.D.C. Killed in flying accident.
ason, 2nd-Lt. John, R.T.C., accountants
t., Northumberland. Killed in action.
ussared, G., R.A.M.C., city treasurer's
t., Hull. Killed at Dunkirk.
rosser, Sgt. P., R.A.F., solicitors' dept.,
ames Conservancy. Killed in action.
parkes, L/Cpl. W. J., A.M.P.C., 22,
ks' dept., Burnham-on-Crouch U.D.C.
d in hospital in England.
Previously reported a prisoner of war.

PRISONERS OF WAR

Potter, Gnr. R., elementary education dept.,
ncs. C.C.
out, Pte. C. W., R.A.M.C., surveyor's
pt., Reading.
Sanders, Lt. R. N., R.E., surveyor's dept.,
ading.
Scott, L/Sgt. L. E., R.A.M.C., asst. sanitary
pector, Hailsham.
Walker, Capt. H. S., R.E., surveyor's dept.,
ading.
Woodland, Pte. E. J., Royal Berks., education
pt., Reading.
Previously reported missing.

MISSING

Holdsworth, J., R.A.F., city treasurer's
pt., Hull.
Meatyard, Able Seaman (Gunlayer) R. L.,
N.V.R., 26, borough engineer's dept., Epsom
nd Ewell, and for four years branch secretary.
Sinclair, Sgt. R., R.A.F., county sanitary
ept., Dunfermline.
Walton, Sub-Lt. D. B., R.N.V.R., city
reasurer's dept., Hull.
Wessells, Sgt. Pilot C., R.A.F., water dept.,
full.
West, H. P., R.N.V.R., city treasurer's
ept., Hull.
Young, Ord. Cadet E. G., R.N., corporation
actor's office, Dunfermline.

Civilian KILLED

Brown, Miss D., town clerk's dept., Hull.

Buswell, H. E., cleansing dept., St.
Marylebone.
Newman, Miss E. M., 38, A.R.P. dept.,
Surrey county council.
Ross, Miss M. J. C., Hope Hospital, Salford.
Simester, Miss E., borough treasurer's dept.,
Bootle.
Strevens, H. C., borough engineer and
surveyor's dept., Chingford.

TWO MORE NALGO G.M.'s Medical Officer Hero of Tunnel Rescues

TWO more NALGO members have been
awarded the George Medal for great
gallantry in civil defence work.
The first is Dr. Malcolm Manson, M.C.,
M.A., M.D., D.P.H., fifty-years-old medical
officer of health at Wood Green, and president
of the Wood Green branch during 1937.
According to the official report of the award,
"Dr. Manson's pertinacity, courage, and
disregard of personal safety, set a wonderful
example and was no doubt responsible for
saving a number of lives." This report refers
to a particular incident when, for three
hours, and ignoring his own serious injuries,
Dr. Manson worked to save the lives of people
trapped in a collapsed tunnel. At one period
he was lying full-length on a heap of debris

trying to release a man partly buried when a
look-out man shouted, "Run for it." Dr.
Manson ignored the warning and was struck
heavily on the back and partly buried beneath
a fall of clay. He was dragged out but, after
resting a few minutes, carried on with the
work, although suffering severe pain. As a
result of his injuries, he had to spend a month
in hospital.

This incident, his colleagues emphasise,
was only one of a number at which Dr.
Manson has displayed outstanding coolness
and courage.

The second NALGO recipient of the
George Medal is Capt. S. W. Warwick, of
the Durham Light Infantry, and formerly
sanitary inspector under the Houghton-le-
Spring U.D.C., later becoming district A.R.P.
controller until he rejoined the army, in which
he held a commission in the last war.

The award was made in recognition of Capt.
Warwick's "conspicuous gallantry in carry-
ing out hazardous work." This work, we
understand, was in connection with bomb
disposal.

The name of Mr. Jack Eddas, A.R.P.
officer at Wembley, should have appeared in
last month's list of NALGO members
receiving awards in the New Year Honours.
He was awarded the M.B.E. for his work in
civil defence.

DIG FOR VICTORY—and the B. & O. FUND!

By JOHN YOUNG

THE Kent county officers' voluntary land
club has recently handed over one
hundred guineas to charities—fifty guineas
have gone to the NALGO Benevolent and
Orphan Fund, six guineas to the war comforts
fund of the branch's women's service com-
mittee, and the remainder to other deserving
organisations, mostly connected with the war.
In addition, after paying all travelling and
other expenses, the club has carried forward
quite a useful balance. How has all this been
achieved?

The club was formed last May, and now has
about 200 members, men and women on the
county council staff with their relatives and
friends. At the inaugural meeting, Lord Corn-
wallis, chairman of the county war agricultural
executive committee, gave us a clear and
direct talk on the food situation, and there was
a general eagerness to help in any way possible.
The response from the women members was
particularly good.

We soon found that farmers in the county
were glad of our help during evenings and at

week-ends. We became known; we were
featured and photographed by the local press—
and we worked very hard! Parties went out,
sometimes considerable distances, to cut
hedges, pick up tons of potatoes, hoe potatoes
and sugar-beet, gather fruit of all kinds, and to
deputise for some of the absent East-enders
in the hop-fields. The labour situation being
as it was (and is), it is certain that our work
secured the marketing of many tons of fruit,
which would otherwise have been left to
rot.

Almost all our work has been on piece
rates, the farmers paying the club's honorary
treasurer. We have had no disputes about
the amounts due to the club. Should they
arise, they would be referred for settlement
to our honorary agricultural advisers.

The club is now planning a new venture.
It is taking over two acres of land in Maidstone.
This will be cultivated by club members,
especially those who are keen to help, but who
are tied to the borough by civil defence and
other duties.

We in Kent feel that what can be done here,
in the vicinity of "Hell's Corner," can
surely be done equally thoroughly in other and
less harassed districts. The need for such efforts
grows ever more pressing. We have it from
Lord Woolton, Mr. Hudson, and others, and
we can surely appreciate it by the exercise of our
own common sense, that it is imperative for
us to cultivate every possible square yard of
land this year.

The farmers are having to put under the
plough more and yet more land, and they are
hedged about with labour problems. If we
can help in some way, we shall be doing a
vital piece of work.

Here we have a way of helping the country,
of assisting the B. and O. Fund at a time when
it was never more sorely in need and, incident-
ally, of helping ourselves, to keep in good
physical condition. Branch officers and others
interested in the formation of a similar volun-
tary land club, should communicate with the
executive officer of their county war agricultural
executive committee. If they would like advice
on the working of clubs, and on such important
questions as the insurance of members, our
honorary secretary, at the County Clerk's
Office, County Hall, Maidstone, will gladly
answer questions.

S. WALES CHOOSES NEW N.E.C. MEMBER

THE South Wales
and Mon-
mouthshire district
committee has
elected Mr. Lewis
Bevan, clerk and
steward of Hensol
Castle Colony for
Mental Defectives,
Pontyclun, Glam.,
as the third N.E.C.
member for the
district, in place of
Mr. A. J. Gould,
who has resigned
from the Service
upon his transfer to the Assistance Board.



Mr. LEWIS BEVAN.

Mr. Bevan entered the service of the
Glamorgan county council in 1912, and in the
same year joined the old Neath and district
branch of NALGO at its inaugural meeting,
transferring his membership to the Glamorgan
branch on its creation in the following year.
After 4 years' war service in France, he was
demobilized a "full private," and on his

return to the service was elected a member of
the branch executive in 1919—a position he
holds to-day. He has been a member of the
branch joint advisory committee since 1931.
was vice-president in 1932, and president for
the three years, 1934-37.

Mr. Bevan has been a prominent member
of the district committee since 1920 and was
vice-president in 1939 and chairman in 1940.
He is also a member of the district B. & O.
sub-committee and of the South Wales
provincial council.

Fortright in thought and speech, his
clarity of mind and directness of expression
have long been valued in the debates of the
district committee. With his predecessor, Mr.
Gould, he worked hard for his branch and
the district upon the "change over" of Poor
Law after April, 1930. His sympathy and
understanding of the problems of the rank and
file, particularly on "bread and butter"
questions are valued in the district, and his
South Wales colleagues are confident that he
will worthily uphold their interests in the
association's affairs.

WHO IS JACKASS?

An Overdue Tribute

WHO is Jackass? The arguments which centred around the personality of A. J. Alan pale into insignificance when compared with those which divide local government officers whenever Jackass is mentioned.

For ourselves, we cannot decide which of our acquaintances it is; for surely, only they could record so accurately those memorable incidents so clearly recognised despite the veneer of satire. And yet our friends serving other authorities are equally certain that the elusive scribe is someone else personally known to them.

Whoever he is, we owe him a debt of gratitude, both for amusing us and, more importantly, for bringing before a wider circle of colleagues an idea of some of the unscrupulous totalitarian methods practised in the smaller local authorities.

An appreciation of Jackass is long overdue; in the meanwhile we are adding his name to our list of reformers from Dickens to Priestley.

Will his efforts encourage the N.E.C. in its crusade against too small authorities? If they do, the reports on action at Much Cowslip and Nether Backwash should prove truly enlightening.

TWO BRANCH SECRETARIES

CONFERENCE AND ELECTIONS

Mr. Langford Replies

MR. TAYLOR, in his letter in the February journal, says that I know ("of course") that "... a conference means the influx of 1,500 delegates and friends ..." Come, come, Mr. Taylor, I said a *conference*—not an early summer holiday!

If the N.E.C. can obtain authority to legalise its action in holding no conference it could, alternatively, secure authority under the emergency regulations to amend the rules to provide for a reduced number of delegates from the branches.

Mr. Taylor thinks it would be wrong to have an election for the N.E.C. in the absence of one-third of the members. It is perhaps unkind of me to remind him and his co-tinkers (sorry about that lost "h") that they did not allow the absence of more than one-third (actually 25-59ths) of the members of the National Executive Council to prevent them from deciding to deprive members of their democratic right to determine the association's policy or to say who shall be their accredited representatives.

But let us be done with all this rot about one-thirds, and other mathematical exercises, and get down to "brass tacks." Unless the compilers of my dictionary had been out to the annual dinner, "democracy" does not mean, as Mr. Metcalfe would have it, a few deciding what is good for the others; it means the few carrying out the wishes of the majority. The wishes of the majority were clearly indicated to the N.E.C. last May, when the N.E.C. bowed to (what would have been) the storm by accepting the resolution requesting a return to normal elections. I say, therefore, that by its decision to cancel both elections and conference in 1941, the N.E.C. has flouted the wishes of the members (whether intentionally or unintentionally).

I have, personally, no desire whatever to elect any single one of the existing council, but I am anxious that members should at least be given an *opportunity* of saying whether or not they wish the existing council to remain in office.

Here again, instead of cancelling the elections in toto, the N.E.C. could, surely, have devised—and obtained authority for—a modified system of voting, through the machinery of the branches and district committees, to do

away with the issue of some 240,000 voting papers. After all, members of the N.E.C. are elected in districts at present.

Mr. Metcalfe prefaces his remarks with the statement that "it is a branch secretary's privilege to let off a little steam now and then." Well, Mr. Metcalfe is a branch secretary, and I am willing to let his letter go at that. There is just one point in it, however, to which I

READERS' FORUM

Letters for the April number must reach the Editor, "Local Government Service," 192, Edgwarebury Lane, Middlesex, not later than March 17.

should like to refer: and that is to point out that when he accuses me of simply "having a go" at those who are doing service for the good of others, he has not made sure of his facts.

No, Mr. Metcalfe, I am not "agin" the N.E.C.—and least of all I "agin" Mr. Taylor (I know enough of his good work for the association to appreciate his earnestness and sincerity); what I am "agin" is the suppression of the rights of the individual member, however good the motives might be!

39, The Green, H. LANGFORD.
Chelmsford.

T.U.C. AFFILIATION

Class Distinctions the Bar?

SLOWLY and surely, the pressure is being applied by those in favour of affiliation to the T.U.C. and the power to strike. Monthly, their outbursts find places in your columns. Almost without exception, they demand, saying "must," "NALGO, thou shalt." Our would-be dictators will get their own way in time, but at a price—radical change in membership of the association.

G. B. S. has written: "In some callings there are such differences of pay and social position that even if all their members could be brought together they would not mix," and: "Union is possible only in trades where the members work together in large bodies; live in the same neighbourhoods; belong to the same social class; and earn about the same money."

Strike action is not possible with our £2,000-a-year men and 10s.-a-week boys in the same association. There are heads of departments so superior that they do not acknowledge their local branch secretaries in public. Whether we believe in our democracy or not, we must admit that our heads of departments—theoretical employees—are our employers. Can men serve two masters? If NALGO wants power to strike, then NALGO must restrict its membership to certain classes. Which office boy dare oppose his chief at the branch executive or general meeting? How much democracy does exist there?

Somehow, our agitators will win. There will be affiliation to the T.U.C. Strikes will arise. Then the unfaithful will desert us. They will be our blacklegs, but NALGO will have gained strength, it will be united as never before because it will have realised that its stumbling block is the class distinction in its own ranks.

Leeds.

FREEMAN SHAW.

Individual Ballot Urged

FROM the number of letters published on this important matter, it is obvious that the time has arrived when the four-year-old decision should be properly reconsidered.

I ask that immediate arrangements be made for an individual ballot of all NALGO members who are holders of permanent appointments (not temporary staffs); just a vote for or against. This will settle the matter fairly. For obvious reasons, a conference vote is never really satisfactory.

The Abbey House, W. J. FURNELL.
Abingdon.

Executive "Yes Men."

CAN it be that the powers which exist in NALGO cannot, or will not, appreciate the general desire of members for affiliation with the T.U.C. If any doubt exists in the minds of these gentlemen on the desirability or otherwise of such a course, surely it is the members themselves who should determine such a decision. This can easily be effected by ballot.

Let us at the same time do away with these self-interested local executive committees, these "Yes men" of the local authorities, and let us have our interests represented by outside sources who do not suffer from the disadvantage of coming under the restraining influence of higher officials.

As a social organisation NALGO leaves nothing to be desired; as an Association determined to enforce the just demands of its members, it is a fiasco.

"EAST SUSSEX."

Enough Reactionaries Already!

I RECENTLY asked a friend his opinion on the question of the affiliation of NALGO to the T.U.C., and this was his reply:

"There are enough reactionaries in the T.U.C. without the importation of another 100,000 local government officers."

I thought that reflected the true picture.

FRANK SMITH

Borough Treasurer's Dept.,
Beckenham, Kent.

EQUAL PAY FOR WOMEN

Why They Get Less

IN your January issue, Miss Nettie M. Cameron complained that women in business were, as a general rule, paid less than men doing similar jobs. Let me point out to her the reasons for this.

In her duties as wife and mother, a woman's position is unassailable and her ability is pre-eminent. In all other walks of life, whether it be as labourer, artisan, professional worker, cook, dress designer, clerk, or what not, the work of the average woman is inferior to that of the average man. There are many women who can carry out these jobs better than most men and the women who write complaining invariably belong to this type. Herein I pay your correspondent a doubtless most-deserved compliment.

Nevertheless, the work of the average woman is inferior to that of the average man, and it is upon the average worker that wage scales are always based. In addition, the greater human responsibilities of the average man enter into the determination of the reward of labour.

Battersea.

R. C. FORSTER.

UNPAID OVERTIME

NALGO's Biggest Problem?

I HAVE often wondered why NALGO does not tackle the many questions which affect the rank and file, but after perusal of the names and positions of the N.E.C. I am not really surprised. We are told that 70 per cent of NALGO members receive salaries of £250 or less, but the N.E.C. seems to be composed of members with salaries over £250, so we have a 30 per cent representative N.E.C.

We pay our subscriptions according to salary; why not allocate seats on the N.E.C. according to salary? Let us be properly democratic, then perhaps the many problems of the majority can be tackled. Look at the present organisation outside London. In Yorkshire we have one divisional organising secretary. He's a grand fellow and a courageous fighter, but no living person can effectively organise and deal with 6,081 square miles

territory, and because of this ineffective
nisation there are members who still
r the cuts made during the economy
of 1931. Had N A L G O been affiliated
the T.U.C. at that time, one third of my
loying council would have been speaking
nd representing others and myself, whereas
L G O's complaining letter still lies on
able after ten years.

there a bigger problem to-day than
nd overtime for the 70 per cent. below £250 ?
should any council, because it employs
n from 9 a.m. to, say, 5.30 p.m. officially,
in a position to instruct him to work
two, three, or four hours each evening
out pay ? I have often wondered whether
legal. I do not know of any other form
employment which operates this disgusting
n of unpaid labour to such an extent.
me, it reeks of slave trade methods. It
ld be interesting to know if a member
ld be dismissed for refusing to work over
out pay and if he could draw unemploy-
ment benefit.

it would also be interesting to know if a
al authority can insert in its conditions of
vice a clause to the effect that members
st work over for nothing.

f 100 clerks work from 9 a.m. to 8 p.m.
days a week, the employing authority
s 1,000 hours of labour for nothing and
as about 25 clerks out of a job.

to me, coerced unpaid overtime is
A L G O's biggest problem, and it should
made illegal.

feel sure the general public would support
abolition, and no decent-minded citizen
uld want to be a member of a local council
hich obtained part of its local services by the
ethods of Old Scrooge.

Why not a Local Government Officers
agna Charta ? What say you, brothers ?
A YORKSHIRE TYKE.

AR SERVICE PAY
Serving Member's View

STEAD of indulging in self-congratulation
about the cost of living bonus,
ALGO'S first job, surely, is to get
ery authority to make up the war pay of local
vernment officers serving with H.M. Forces
the level of their full civil pay. I see from
e January journal that only 42.1 per cent. of
hauthorities are doing this, and that the rest are
nting only qualified pay or nothing at all.
Surely a local government officer's salary
vers the increase in the cost of living when
ly small amounts of the essential foods can
be obtained, and there is therefore no need
or all this hue and cry after a bonus !

My own authority is paying a bonus of
per cent. on salaries up to £150, and 2 per
ent. on the balance over £150 up to a figure
hich I do not know. This means that girls
rning up to £150—the maximum of the
eneral female grade—are receiving up to
12 per annum extra, while the man with an
verage salary of, say, £200 to £250 per annum
receiving £13 to £14 extra.

Now take the other side—that of the officer
serving with the Forces. A single man gets
om the authorities a maximum of 7s. a week,
nd a married man (with no children) 14s. a
week. That means that the wife of a man
with no children) who is drawing the normal
ate of pay of, say, a sapper in the Royal
Engineers—2s. 6d. a day—receives 18s. a
week marriage allowance, plus 7s. from her
usband's war pay and 14s. from the Corpora-
tion—a grand total of 39s. a week.

Has not the cost of living gone up for the
older's wife ? Who needs the money most,
he member still in his civil occupation, and
n receipt of a salary that provides at least
or a reasonable standard of living, or the
wife of a soldier, who is receiving an amount
hat provides for mere existence ?

Come on, Nalgotes, don't just ask for war
pay to be made up to the civil level, but
rove that you are sincere by offering, if

necessary, to sacrifice your cost of living bonus
(which you can forgo without starving), so
that the wives and dependants of members in
H.M. Forces receive fair pay and a living wage.
Remember, it may be your turn soon to be
called up, so let's have some united action.

I may add that my authority reduced the
soldier's pay at the same meeting as it granted
the cost of living bonus to the others, thus
making it appear that such increase was
granted at the expense of the soldier.

Longmoor, Liss, Cpl.; R. BURNS, R.E.
Hants.

DR. ROBSON'S ARTICLE
"Timely and Urgent"

THE striking article by Dr. W. A. Robson
is timely and of urgent importance. For
several years before the war, it was apparent
to anyone who could read between the lines
that Regionalism was coming. The war has
quickened the pace, and it will be still further
accelerated. The Royal Commission on Local
Government on Tyneside was, in my opinion,
not chiefly instigated by any of the local
authorities, nor was it the outcome of local
difficulties—it appeared to be encouraged by
the central government departments who
wished to solve the problem by a process of
gradualness. It was a try-out which failed,
and rightly failed, because of a lack of local
support and the want of a clear-cut policy.

The Government should, at the earliest
possible moment, tackle the question with a
major general Act—what might be called a
Local Government Areas (Redistribution) Bill.

On the other hand, as you learned con-
tributor says in effect, democracy cannot
sanction government by Regional Com-
missions; nor, with all respect, by civil
servants. I speak as a municipal clerical
officer of over 35 years' experience and I
emphatically agree with the view that bureau-
cracy is not our English way of life. We must
have public opinion and we must have
democratic representation. Town councils—
and town-councillors—have many faults,
drawbacks, and shortcomings, but one-man
government from an office will not satisfy us.
RUNNYMEDE.

Reorganisation of Staffs

DR. ROBSON puts forward a very interesting
plan of post-war reform in local govern-
ment. Some of his proposals will no doubt be
carried through. We can but hope that much
of the overlapping by various authorities (e.g.,
health services and public assistance) which
took place before the war, and in some measure
now continues, will be carefully examined by
Mr. Greenwood and his advisors.

The local government staffs should also be
reorganised whereby appointment, promotion,
and mobility can be arranged by some central
body, and part-time employment abolished.

Hereford. REGINALD J. CROSS.

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
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N. Devon, quoting your NALGO number.

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Subscriptions and Bonus

Are subscriptions to the association payable upon bonus?

Yes. Rule 9(a) provides that "Members shall pay a monthly subscription . . . based on their total salary including bonus and fees." It is surprising that members should question paying an increased subscription on bonus, since the bonus generally paid was obtained by the strenuous efforts of the Association, through the national and provincial Whitley councils.

Unemployment Insurance

I was offered an appointment under the Ministry of Supply through the Central Register at a salary of £320 a year. The Minister of Health indicated that the appointment would rank as war service for the purposes of the Local Government Staffs (War Service) Act, 1939, and my council released me. The Ministry of Supply is now deducting unemployment insurance contributions from my salary, though in the event of my employment with it being terminated I would return to my civil appointment, in which I was exempted from unemployment insurance. Have I to pay unemployment insurance contributions?

There seems to be no provision whereby you can continue to be exempted from unemployment insurance, and, therefore, if you are no longer in exempted employment you must pay the contributions, since your salary is under £420 a year.

Income Tax on Lost Income

Owing to the war, certain income which I formerly received as returning officer and registration officer in connection with local elections and the preparation of electors' lists has ceased. The Inspector of Taxes has assessed me on that income, and I still hold the offices connected with it. If, however, I had ceased to hold such offices there would be no assessment for 1940-41. Can the offices be regarded as having ceased, in view of the provisions of the Local Elections and Register of Electors (Temporary Provisions) Act, 1939?

No, particularly having regard to the fact that the Local Elections and Register of Electors (Temporary Provisions) Act, 1940, provides for officers who hold such positions to pay superannuation contributions based on the fees received in 1939, although no fees are now being received. It would seem, however, that you are not liable to pay income tax on income which you do not receive.

Income Tax on Honoraria

My chief was appointed national registration officer, and as deputy town clerk I voluntarily assisted in the administrative work involved. There was no contract of employment and no arrangement as to remuneration. Later, I received an honorarium from him for my services. Am I liable to pay income tax on the amount received?

Yes. A voluntary payment to the holder of an office or employment is a profit of the office or employment if it accrues to the holder in virtue of his office or employment, notwithstanding that there may not be any legal obligation to make the payment or that it is made not by the employer but by a third party.

Personal Injuries (Civilians) Scheme

Is any compensation payable under the Personal Injuries (Civilians) Scheme to the widow of a local government officer who was killed during an air raid?

Yes, under article 14 of the scheme. The

pension varies between 15s. 6d. and 22s. 6d. a week according to circumstances. A pension may also be awarded in respect of dependant children.

Superannuation—Partial Retirement.

I hold a number of part-time appointments with local authorities and am a contributory employee in all of them. Due to the strain of office at present I would like to retire on superannuation from some of them. Can I do so? I am 62.

Yes, if you have completed 40 years' service, or if you have completed 10 years' service and can produce a medical certificate that, by reason of permanent ill health or infirmity of



Conscript's dream of a reserved occupation

mind or body, you have become incapable of discharging your duties efficiently.

You might find, however, that when you come to retire from your other appointments on attaining the age of 65, service already taken into account in calculating your superannuation allowances will not be reckonable. "Service," as defined in section 40 (1) of the Local Government Superannuation Act, 1937, does not include service in any employment if the person in question has already become entitled in respect of that service in that employment to a superannuation allowance under the Act.

It would be advisable for you to retire from all your appointments at the same time.

Superannuation — Transferred Rating Employee

I was transferred to a county borough council by virtue of the operation of the Rating and Valuation Act, 1925. I continued to be subject to the Poor Law Officers' Superannuation Act, 1896, until March 31, 1939. I became subject to the Local Government Superannuation Act, 1937, as from April 1, 1939, and contributed at the rate of 3½% of my salary. I have now accepted an appointment under a county council, and am told that I must contribute at the rate of 6% of my salary. Is this correct?

Yes. The modifications referred to in paragraph 6 of part I of the second schedule to the Act of 1937 which include payment of contributions at reduced rates varying from 2½% to 3½% apply to a transferred rating employee only whilst he is in the employment of the local authority in whose employment he was on April 1, 1939. The reason is that

the superannuation rights of a rating employee who continued to be subject to the Act of 1896 on transfer under the Rating and Valuation Act, 1925, were, by the latter Act, only preserved as respects the transferred offices.

Provident Society Benefits

Does the monthly contribution of 10s. 6d. in the NALGO Provident Society's "Husband's Policy" cover my wife and child for medical expenses?

Yes. You are entitled to claim up to £50 each for yourself wife and child for medical expenses.

Member Outside Service

Can a member who takes up an appointment with the Unemployment Assistance Board continue his membership of the Provident Society?

Yes, on payment of an additional management fee of 3d. per month, but if he desires to resign his membership it will be terminated by the committee of management, and he will not be required to forfeit a sum equal to twelve monthly contributions to the Common Sick Fund under the Sickness Scheme, Table 1.

Sickness Insurance and Simple Endowment for Women

Can a member take out a simple endowment without insuring for sickness benefit?

No. An applicant who is not a member of the sickness scheme (Table I) must make application for membership on N.P.S. form 2 and N.P.S. form 6. Women members of the sickness insurance scheme (Table I) who have not attained the age of 50 will, however, be allowed to contribute to the simple endowment only, and it will not be necessary to alter their present rates of contributions.

May a member who insures for a simple endowment for five years extend the period at the end of that term to, say, 10, 15, or 20 years?

Yes. She may make application for the simple endowment to be extended and continue to pay the monthly contribution for the extended period which will qualify her for a simple endowment for the extended period as given in Table V.

House Insurance

My freehold house, new, cost £1,200 in 1929. Leasehold, it would have cost £1,000. Various extras to interior, a brick garage, washhouse, etc., raised the cost to £1,400, at which it is now insured. Since 1929, prices fell, but they have again risen. Having regard to the fact that the land, valued at £200, on which it stands is indestructible, do you consider that £1,400 is a reasonable insurance value?

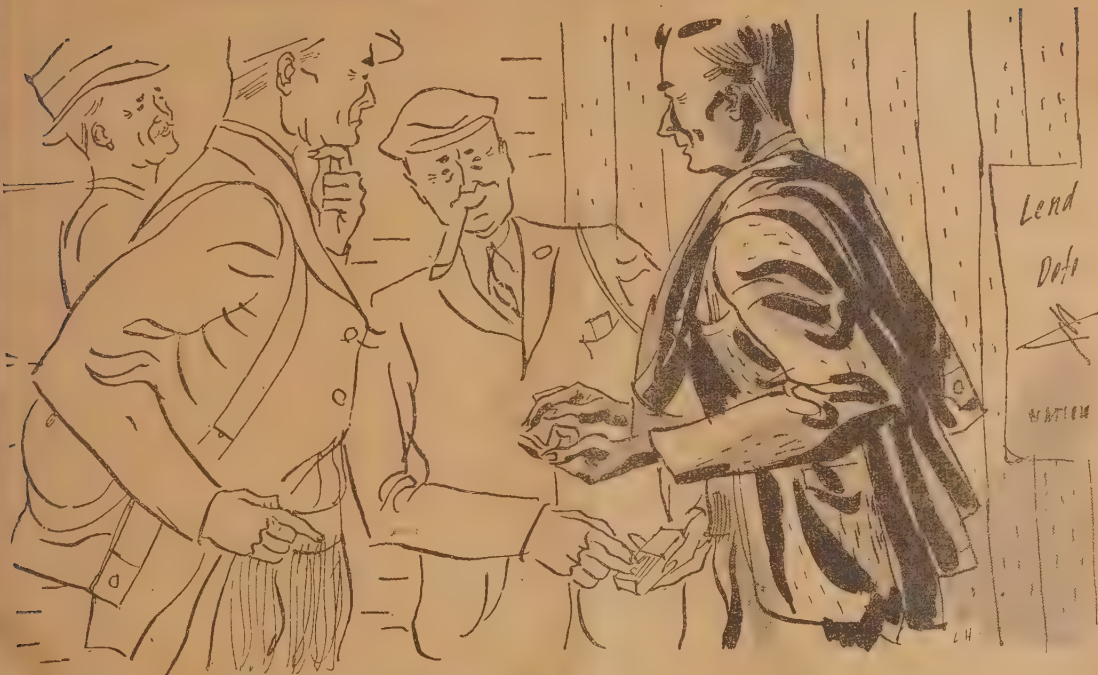
The cost of building materials, etc., is now approximately 50 per cent. greater than it was to the outbreak of war, and consequently if the replacement cost of a house was £1,200 then, it would be at least £1,800 now. Under most policies, if there is under-insurance, a pro-rata settlement of the claim will be made; i.e., if the present day value of a house is £1,800, but it is insured for only £1,200, and a claim for £600 arises, the insured, being under-insured by one-third, would have to bear one-third of the loss of £600 himself, namely £200.

Lost N.H.I. Card

My National Health Insurance contribution card was destroyed when my office was demolished. What must I do?

Report the loss to the local district office of the Ministry of Health or to the Ministry of Health, Insurance Department, Blackpool. If the Ministry is satisfied of the amount of stamps affixed to the card and that it has been destroyed, it will consider making an allowance in lieu.

*To the Officers and Members of the
National Association of Local Government Officers*



HELP THE COUNTRY BY HELPING THE WAR SAVINGS CAMPAIGN

YOU, as an active member of N.A.L.G.O., are the man best suited to point out to your fellow workers the vital importance of War Savings.

There are already 90,000 Savings Groups in Industry and Commerce over 6,000 of these being in the Local Government Services. All are contributing splendidly. But even greater efforts are needed... and this is how you can help.

Advise your friends, if they are not already in a Savings Group, to decide how much, with a bit extra effort, they can put by every week and then to see the Group Secretary about joining.

Where the member is already subscribing to a Group, try to get him to increase his subscription.

If a Group does not exist, see about forming one.

TELLING POINTS ON WAR SAVINGS

- 1** Emphasize Saving as the great need of the country in time of War.
- 2** Explain that we cannot at the same time have weapons for our fighting men and satisfy all our personal needs.
- 3** Point out what the other Departments are doing—don't let your friends lag behind.
- 4** Point out how valuable these Savings will be when Peace is restored.
- 5** Tell your friends of the interest their Savings will earn. Explain that War Savings are the safest form of investment.
- 6** Say, too, how easy it is to save on pay day through your Savings Group.

BEGIN THE GOOD WORK TO-DAY

ISSUED BY THE NATIONAL SAVINGS COMMITTEE · LONDON



Helpful

Two elderly ladies took, as an evacuee, a small boy from London. The first afternoon he said to them: "If you two old geesers want to go out for a quick one, I'll look after the house for you."

Popular Land Girls

"I haven't done so badly with the land girls," said a farmer to me. "I get a lot of work out of the young chaps that comes to help them."

No Flies On Her

"My wife, why she's as busy as a cow's tail in summer."

Application

"I am temporarily disengaged because of an economic gesture on the part of my previous employer."

Critique

Bernard Shaw was once asked his opinion of a violinist who was giving a recital.

"He reminds me of Paderewski," said Mr. Shaw.

"But Paderewski is not a violinist."
"Neither is this gentleman."

Purple Warning

Witness, at Highgate: "I heard a faint puffing sound, and three minutes later a policeman whisked round the corner."

Which Are You?

"The world," Dwight Morrow once wrote to his son, "is divided into people who do things and people who get the credit. Try, if you can, to belong to the first class. There's far less competition."

—Harold Nicolson, Dwight Morrow.

Excuse My Yawn

I divide
the world
into two main classes—
those who perpetually
divide
the world
into two main classes;
and those who don't.

I prefer
the latter.

—Pinch.

The following two paragraphs have been "lifted" from "All Swell," an admirable monthly bulletin published by the Camberwell branch of NALGO for the especial benefit of members serving with the Forces. Other branches might well follow their example.

Clerihew

The Town Clerk
Was overheard to remark
That nothing put him off his work
So much as being called the Town Clurk. (D. L.)

Local Government Post-bag

Dear Sir,—Having been bombed at the rear of my premises will I hope explain my Details being placed on one side and finally overlooked.—Yours faithfully,—

AT RANDOM By "Hyperion"

Drawings by J. Carver

If these hours be dark at least do not let us sit deedless, like fools and fine gentlemen, thinking the common toil not good enough for us and beaten by the muddle; but rather let us work like good fellows trying by some dim candle-light to set our workshop ready against to-morrow's light.

William Morris.

CROSS YOUR FINGERS

We've heard of old witch doctors
Who, asked for their advice
When death and demons threatened,
Replied with up-turned eyes:
"Don't fret unduly, brother,
Cross fingers twice."

So, now that Hitler glowers,
The humble scan the skies,
And experts chant this message:
"Protective works are nice—
But better still are ear-plugs,
Is our advice."

To clear up strafes, the warden
Aye shoots off like a gun,
Takes charge, reports, and covers
His tasks a thousand and one.
"All useless, Smith, unless you
Filled Form M.1."

First-aiders, doctors, nurses
(A keen, efficient crew),
Have, even under bombing,
Quietly carried through!
The Ministry's only query:
"The 'A.T.' brew?"

Sweating report staffs wrestle
With messages a legion,
To send each needful service
And save life quickly. (See, John?)
"But, dammit, was the message
Expressed to Region?"

It's not so much the craters,
The crippled or the dead—
Do paper records tally
With what the Ministry's said?
To facts beyond the records
With the ostrich bury your head;
Send off reports quadruple,
And so to bed.

W. W. M.

*"A.T."—Anti-Tetanus serum.

End of a Short Story

By that time his huff had arrived and he departed in it.

Gossip Paragraph

We understand that the new organ at the Parish Church has electrical action and that



the organist, by touching a button, can change his combinations without leaving his seat.



Ignorance Is Bliss

"Isn't it wonderful? Jimmy's been awarded the C.B. for ten days!"

Invasion—What the Stars Foretell!

Broadly speaking, the danger dates of the last weeks and the first weeks of each calendar month in 1941, particularly February, May, and July.

R. H. Naylor, in the "Sunday Express."

I guess you're right, brother.

Chestnut Re-cooked

Commercial Traveller: "What do you do with all those apples?"

Farmer: "We eat all we can, but what we can't we can."

Commercial Traveller: "It's the same with us. We sell all we can, but what we can't we sell we cancel."

That's the Spirit!

R. J. Wishes to thank his many friends for their kind interest, but as it is impossible to acknowledge every letter he would advise them that despite enemy action his cellar was undamaged and he is still able to supply SEAGER'S GIN from stock.

—Advt. in "The Times."

Nightmare

Wife (to husband): "I had such a horrible dream last night. I dreamt that you and Chas Gable were fighting over me, and you won!"

The Fuehrer Calls

Hitler was playing bridge with Goering, Goebbels, and von Brauchitsch.

Goering called! "Two hearts."

Goebbels called! "Two—no trumps."

von Brauchitsch! "Three spades."

Hitler! "One club."

Goering, Goebbels, and von Brauchitsch called! "Pass" . . . "Pass" . . . "Pass."

Blitz Postbag

The following letter was received by a woman evacuated to the country from her caretaker in London:

Dear Madam,—Don't trouble to have new keys made for the front door because there isn't one. I went round to clean up Thursday like I always do, and the place was in such a state that I didn't do nothing.

I can't find the front door, nor window, and the ceiling's down in your bedroom, and then blue ornaments what you was so afraid'd break are in bits on the floor. I can't find nothing for plaster and dust. Never mind, you must cheer up and not worry like the man on the wireless always says. The damage ain't much, considering what Jerry dropped down.

(Hose) Pipes of Peace

Before the Birmingham blitz a man who was organising fire squads for a certain road arranged a stirrup-pump display in his garden. When it was all over, a dear old lady came up.

"Thank you so much," she said, "for a very pleasant afternoon. You have succeeded for this little time, in making me forget the war."

lem for Strategists

The pen may have been mightier than the sword, but can the typewriter compete with the pen?"

—William Bledsoe.

1 Government Post-bag

Dear Sir,—I have to report that on the evening of Thursday last, I did, with malice aforethought, insert, place, or otherwise drive to make enter, the coin box of your electric light meter, one foreign coin, to wit, franc, in connection with which we have some previous correspondence. The circumstances under which this heinous offence was committed were as follows. On the evening I suffered a realistic reproduction of "The Light that Failed," owing, no doubt, to the fact that the amount of electricity due to me from the last coin was exhausted. Frantic search of pockets, purses, boxes, etc. failed to bring to light even one solitary shilling. At past ten o'clock, even the local hostelry was closed. My last hopes were dashed to the ground. Not being a conjurer, I could not produce shillings from receptacles that did not previously hold such a coin. I never realised before that shillings were so scarce or so valuable. In desperation, therefore, I seized a miserable franc and crept silently along the meter, gazing around the while to discover if the long arm of the law had somehow managed to become aware that I proposed doing something other than the "current affairs of the realm."

As a proof of my contrition, I enclose herewith a postal order for one shilling, and trust that my obvious sorrow will prevent the appearance of a policeman on my doorstep. I trust that your collector will be apprised of the happening and that he will kindly leave the jolly old franc when he empties the meter. I deem that it might come in useful again.

Yours faithfully, —

COST OF LOVING

If you don't Contemplate Marriage

	£	s.	d.
Orchids to wear for evening	..	7	6
Theatre tickets (stalls)	..	1	5 0
Taxi, her place to theatre	..	4	6
Drink in interval	..	3	10
Supper afterwards	..	2	0 0
Taxi home to her place	..	4	6
Ditto, if very much in love	..	8	0
Dozen roses next morning	..	7	0
	5	0	4

If you do Contemplate Marriage

	£	s.	d.
No orchids to wear	..	—	—
Cinema tickets (balcony)	..	2	0
Bus to cinema	..	—	2
No interval, no drink	..	—	—
Supper afterwards	..	—	10
Newspaper to eat supper out of	..	—	—
Bus home	..	—	2
No roses next morning	..	—	—
	3	2	

If she's your wife

	£	s.	d.
No orchids	..	—	—
No theatre or cinema	..	—	—
No supper	..	—	—
No taxi or bus	..	—	—
No roses	..	—	—

—From The Referee.



"We—ell, if you think it will get us more petrol, Mr. Surveyor."

Criticism

"He allowed the grass to grow under his feet."

—Comment on an ex-Cabinet Minister.

Our own view is that he didn't exactly allow it. He was just too doggone dumb to stop it.

"Marrers"

I've allus bin partial to marrers, and for years and years I've set me heart on winning the cup; but 'twas allus second prize, or highly commended or also ran. But this year 'twas different; and for why? 'Cause I gen 'em the right sart o' muck. And let me tell 'ee this: I won that thear cup long afore my marrers was even planted. Now that sounds mortal queer, so I'll tell 'ee. One morning last winter I was mombing up the top-road, having me a bit o' sunshine, and there 'twas in the middle o' the road—the biggest hummock o' muck as ever a mon did see! I sez to Harry Smith, the roadman, "Harry, me boy, what in 't'ell be this?" "Effulunts!" sez Harry. "Effulunts?" I sez, "Aye," sez Harry, "the circus come this road this marning." I sez to meself, "Dan'l, if effulunts can grow hollocking gret feet and trunks and tusksies, what 'ull they do for my vegetable marrers?" So I telled Harry, "You look arter that hummock while I guz whoam for my trucks." I scorts down the hill like a long dog, and I was soon up agyun and had that thear hummock picked up and safe in my gyardin. Then I sez to meself, "Dan'l, you got the right muck at last, so you can afford to bide your time." And I did. For the start, I just 'ticed 'em with it, and when it come t'ards the show I picked out a marrer that looked exter special and I gen it him hot and strong. You should 'a sin him; why he growed like a house afire. And you should 'a watched their faces when I carr'd him into the tent.

—"The Countryman."

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33 1/3% Manufacturers Discount allowed to members on production of membership card

SCOTTISH NOTES

Whitley Council Progress: Glasgow 'Serfdom' Allegation

THE annual meeting of the Scottish Whitley council was held in Edinburgh on January 31. The report showed that there had been ten meetings during the year and two meetings of the nursing staffs committee, mentioned that county councils were taking an increasing interest in the work of the council, and that Mr. R. A. Ure had been co-opted to represent Lanark county council, and referred to the negotiations which had taken place on war increases, war service allowances, and scales for nursing staffs and health visitors.

Negotiations had taken place between the Whitley council and a new body, known as the joint conciliation committee for mental services. This committee, although established to deal with local authority employees, was formed without consultation with the Whitley council and the council felt that difficulties would arise if separate bodies were dealing independently with similar classes of employees.

Proposals made by the Ministry of Labour were discussed at the meeting, but there was a difference of opinion on whether they would be workable, especially in view of the general non-cooperative attitude of the joint conciliation committee. The employees' sides of both the manual workers' council and the staff council met to consider their

The Scottish secretary addressed the meeting and answered a number of questions, particularly on the negotiations for war increases.

Port-Glasgow Dispute

After long-continued but unsuccessful efforts to induce Port-Glasgow town council to adopt the Whitley council awards on salaries and war increases, it was decided to report the dispute to the Minister of Labour under the provisions of the National Arbitration Order. Negotiations have since taken place between officials of the Ministry of Labour and the Scottish secretary. Since, at the time of writing, there appears to be good hope of a settlement, it has been agreed to give Port-Glasgow another fourteen days beyond the time limit fixed by the order in which to negotiate.

Renfrewshire Salaries

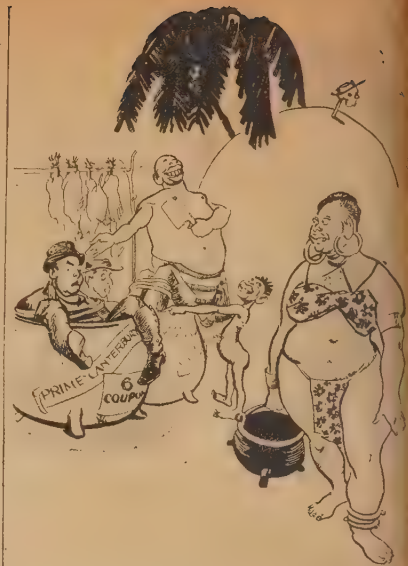
At a meeting of the Renfrewshire branch executive, the position of Renfrewshire county council on salary scales and war increases was discussed, and it was agreed that Mr. Mortimer should write again to the county clerk, complaining of the delay in dealing with our application. It was also agreed that application should be made to the town council for increases of salary to meter readers in the electricity department.

Transfer Permission Refused

An amazing situation has arisen in the public assistance department at Glasgow. It looks as if the corporation were prepared to sanction a rather subtle form of serfdom. A man in the department was offered an appointment by the Assistance Board provided he could get the consent of the corporation to his transfer. This consent is necessary under the rules made by virtue of the Local Government and Civil Service Act, 1935, if the officer concerned is to carry with him his superannuation rights. Hitherto, the giving of consent has been regarded as merely an administrative act, but the corporation is now trying to tether the man concerned to its service and to prevent others likely to be offered appointments from accepting them. The divisional secretary is to interview a committee at an early date, since it is felt that the corporation has no right to stand in the way of a man's advancement.

Sir P. Dollan on Regionalism

At the annual social of the Glasgow branch, Lord Provost Sir Patrick Dollan spoke on war problems and the need for the extension of local government areas. Why, he asked, should there not be a Clyde Valley Regional Council? Why should the rates vary so much in districts and towns



"Come along, Aggie—you know we've only two coupons."

in the Clyde Valley? In housing estates, there were border lines beyond which the corporation could not build. The public health, the police, and other services, might very well be extended to the benefit of all concerned beyond the boundaries of the city. He considered this question was one to which members of the Association should give thought, for it intimately affected them.

Baillie Munro and Councillor Bennett also spoke, and Mr. J. Cassels Pinkerton, who presided, assured the Lord Provost and the other members of the corporation present that NALGO members were 100 per cent behind them in all their efforts to win the war.

SALARIES AND SERVICE CONDITIONS

MIDLANDS AND S. WALES REGION

Mansfield Woodhouse U.D.C. and Belper R.D.C. have adopted the East Midland provincial council salary scales.

Stafford C.C. has introduced the following scales for temporary women staff:

Starting under 19: £40 under 16; £50 at 16+£10—£150. Starting at 19 and over: Commencing salary in accordance with experience and qualifications, but not to exceed £90 at 19+£10—£150. The scale is advanced by £10 p.a. to those with school certificate.

NORTH-WESTERN AND NORTH WALES

Barnoldswick-in-Furness B.C. has approved the recommendations of the Whitley council in respect of the salaries of the wages and accounts clerks in the borough engineer's and borough surveyor's departments.

A member of the electricity dept. staff at Cheadle, sustaining an accident during the course of his duties, received less than full wages from the council, but on the application of NALGO it was decided to make up his wages (approximately £21) for the period of incapacity.

Ellesmere Port U.D. has increased the cost-of-living bonus, as a result of an application by NALGO, from a flat rate of 3s. per week, with a salary limitation of £208 p.a. to 3s. p.w. under 18; 7s. 6d. p.w. 18 and over, earning up to £350; and £30 p.a. for those earning over £350.

Glossop B.C. has agreed to put into operation the revised scales in respect of junior and general female clerks, from September last.

Ince-in-Makerfield U.D.C. has approved an application on behalf of the caretakers of the public buildings for an increase in basic wage rate.

A new sub-branch of the Lancashire county branch has been formed at Higher Ince for county mid-wives in and about the Wigan area. The local correspondent is Mrs. S. A. Bowden, 416, Chorley-road, Westhoughton.

Liverpool Corporation, on the application of NALGO, has decided to pay the corporation scale for shorthand typists and female clerical staff to money takers at the baths and wash-houses.

The corporation has also approved an application for the shortening of the incremental period in the scales of salaries for disinfecting inspectors, timekeepers, storekeepers, and cleansing inspectors.

Oldham C.B. has withdrawn a proposal to change the weekly pay day, involving the loss of one day's pay for the first week, following a NALGO deputation to the finance committee.

NORTH-EASTERN AND YORKSHIRE

Bingley U.D.C. has persistently declined to make any allowances to employees serving in H.M. Forces. The Bingley branch is therefore asking members of the staff to contribute a small sum each week to a fund from which grants may be made to the wife or other dependents of each member in the Forces. A special sub-committee has been set up to administer the fund. While this co-operative effort is commendable, we should be happier to report that the council was meeting its obligations.

Haltwhistle U.D.C. has adopted the scales of salaries recommended by the Yorkshire joint council:

Males—Grades A, B (1), B (2), C and D.

Females—Grades A, B, and C, and Grade D (modified).

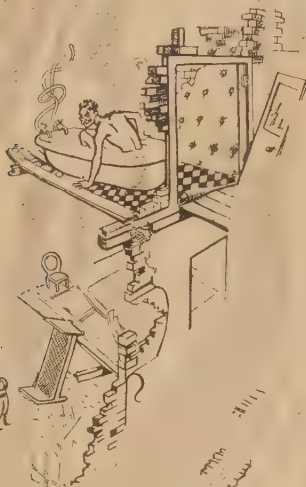
The council has also adopted regulations regarding recruitment, holidays, sickness allowances, and examination grants. Under the latter provision a special increment of £10 is payable in respect of the intermediate examination and a further increment of £10 in respect of the final examination of one of the approved examining bodies.

OBITUARY

We regret to record the death of Mr. J. L. Clark, for a number of years B. & O. correspondent of the Newcastle-on-Tyne branch, and chairman of the North Eastern B. & O. regional committee.

RETIREMENT

Mr. T. E. Warburton, hon. treasurer of the Preston and district branch since 1928, has retired from the service of his authority. During his treasurership branch membership increased from 210 to 494.



"Where the h— did I put that soap?"

attitude, but agreed to adjourn consideration for a future meeting. This was reported to the full council and approved.

All the existing office-bearers, the executive committee, and the nursing staffs committee, were re-elected.

Aberdeen's Record Membership

At the annual meeting of the Aberdeen branch on January 28, the secretary, Miss Forsyth, reported a membership of 460—the highest figure yet attained. The county staffs had joined in large numbers, but there was still room for improvement in most departments. Successful work had been done on service conditions and appeals on superannuation questions.

The President, Mr. A. J. McIntosh, said that the application to the county council for a war bonus had been successful, and he believed that the county council had now been recommended to affiliate to the Whitley Council.

Mr. John Leslie submitted a favourable financial statement, and it was decided to give £20 to the Benevolent and Orphan Fund.

South Wales Wants Conference and Elections

The following resolution was adopted at the annual meeting of the South Wales district committee, held at Cardiff on January 25:

That the South Wales and Monmouthshire district committee is firmly of the opinion that the suspension of the annual conference and election of the N.E.C. this year again is of the greatest harm to the association and consequently urges the N.E.C. to make arrangements forthwith for the holding of the elections and annual conference in 1941.

A notice of motion from the Pontypridd branch, designed to secure that the secretary of the staff side of the South Wales provincial council should be the divisional officer for the district, was defeated.

The chairman, Mr. Lewis Bevan, presented a cheque as a token of the high regard of the members of the committee to Mr. A. J. Gould, who recently retired from his position as district representative on the N.E.C., on his leaving the Service to take up a post under the Assistance Board. Mr. Bevan paid tribute to the great work Mr. Gould had done for NALGO since the transfer of poor law into local government in 1930.

Mr. Gould, replying, acknowledged the co-operation he had received from his colleagues in the Glamorgan branch and on the district committee. He was happy to think that, with the support of the very capable representatives of the districts in NALGO, some improvements in

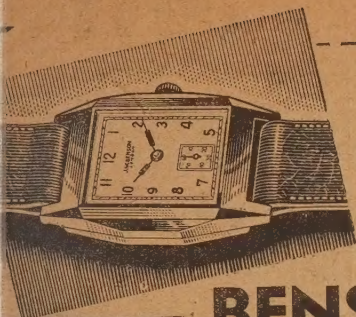
salaries and service conditions had been achieved during his period of service on the N.E.C. He hoped that, some day, he might return to the service and renew his work for NALGO.

In response to an invitation from the N.E.C., the district committee elected Mr. Lewis Bevan, who is clerk and steward of Hensol Castle, an establishment maintained by Glamorgan C.C., to succeed Mr. Gould as its representative on the N.E.C. Mr. A. J. Cottle, Abertillery, was elected Chairman of the district committee and Mr. B. J. Evans, Garmarthen C.C., vice-chairman.

NORTH EASTERN DISTRICT COMMITTEE

Mr. V. Grainger, honorary secretary of the district committee for the past sixteen years, has reluctantly relinquished that office on being appointed chief cashier to the Newcastle-upon-Tyne corporation. At the annual meeting of the committee on February 8, many tributes were paid to his able and devoted services, his unswerving loyalty to the association, and his keen and lively interest in NALGO matters generally.

As honorary secretary for some time of the Newcastle-upon-Tyne branch, and as a representative on the N.E.C. since 1932, Mr. Grainger has given unstinted service to the association for the past 20 years. Mr. J. Y. Fawcett (South Shields) was appointed to succeed him as honorary secretary of the district committee.



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UP to the date of going to press, 896 local authorities had adopted cost-of-living bonus schemes for their official staffs. Of these, 314 had adopted the first National Whitley Council scale in full, 118 had adopted that

Cost of Living 27.1 p.e. Up

The Ministry of Labour cost of living index figures for each of the past six months, showing the increase in cost of living of a "typical working-class family," since July, 1914 (taken as 100) are:

September ... 187	December ... 195
October ... 189	January ... 196
November ... 192	February ... 197

The actual percentage increases in the cost of living since September 1, 1939 (when the index figure was 155) are, therefore:

September ... 20.6	December ... 25.8
October ... 21.9	January ... 26.4
November ... 23.9	February ... 27.1

scale with modifications, four had adopted the second Whitley Council scale, and 464 had adopted other scales. Detailed figures are:

ENGLAND AND WALES—

	N.W.C. Scale in Full	N.W.C. Scale Modified	Other Scales	Total
C.C. ...	2	15	34	51
C.B. ...	20	9	39	68
Met. B. & City C. ...	—	21	6	27
B. ...	67	23	101	191
U.D. ...	133	17	134	284
R.D. ...	74	28	65	167
Other Auths. ...	18	5	34	57

SCOTLAND—

C.C. ...	—	—	13	13
Burghs ...	—	—	34	34
Other Auths. ...	—	—	4	4

This month's list, which is additional to those published in previous issues, is:

ENGLAND & WALES

WHITLEY SCALE (Second Award)

(Ten per cent on salaries up to £300; first award to apply to salaries over £300.)

BOROUGHES

Torquay

URBAN DISTRICT

Barnoldswick

RURAL DISTRICTS

Rotherham

Croft

WHITLEY SCALE (First Award)

(Six per cent on first £300; 3 per cent on excess over £300, or on £200, whichever is the less.)

URBAN DISTRICTS

Arnold	Biddulph	Tettenhall	Fleet
Aslager	Hucknall	Whaley Bridge	

RURAL DISTRICTS

Southam

Workshop

WHITLEY SCALE MODIFIED

BOROUGHES

Buxton—6 per cent up to £300.
Scarborough—6 per cent up to £300, with marginal adjustment to £318.

URBAN DISTRICT

New Mills—6 per cent to all officers; increments advanced five months.

RURAL DISTRICTS

Clown—6 per cent up to £300.
East Retford—6 per cent on first £300 of salaries up to £400 for all staff (except temporary clerks in licence duties' office whose employment is casual), with adjustment to provide that no officer earning over £400 is in a worse position than an officer earning £400; from April 1, 1940.
South—6 per cent up to £300, from Jan. 1.
North Kesteven—5 per cent to all officers.
Welton—5 per cent to all officers.

OTHER AUTHORITIES

Chesterfield and Bolsover Water Board—5 per cent on first £300; 2½ per cent on next £300.

OTHER SCALES

BOROUGHES

Godalming—2s. p.w. on salaries up to £260; salary and bonus not to exceed £260.
Scunthorpe—£7 10s. p.a. to officers under 21; £15 over 21, from April 1, 1940.

URBAN DISTRICTS

Rushden—5s. p.w. to adult male, 4s. to adult female officers; 3s. 6d. to juniors.
Saltburn and Marske—8 per cent on first £150, 4 per cent on balance over £150.

RURAL DISTRICTS

Blaby—3s. 6d. p.w. on salaries up to £182.
Holderness—5s. 6d. p.w. to married, 3s. to single officers.

Newton Abbot—5s. p.w. to all over 21 and to married officers under 21; 3s. to single officers under 21, provided salary and bonus do not exceed £285.

SCOTLAND

COUNTY COUNCILS

Aberdeen—Scottish Whitley council first award, retrospective to May 1, 1940.
Ross and Cromarty—5 per cent to all under 21; 6 per cent on first £300, 3 per cent on next £50 to those over 21; salary and bonus not to exceed £350.
Wigtown—10 per cent up to £200, 5 per cent on balance up to £350.

AMENDMENTS

(The dates given in brackets refer to the issues of "Local Government Service" in which previous decisions were published.)

COUNTY BOROUGHES

Doncaster—Previous award (July) increased to 8s. and 4s. respectively, from Feb. 1, 1941.
Tynemouth—Previous decision (August) rescinded; now adopted Whitley scale (first award), retrospective to April 1, 1940.

BOROUGHES

Stockton-on-Tees—Previous decision (May) rescinded; now adopted North Eastern provincial council scale for

Owing to shortage of space, the lists of bonus awards and war service pay decisions will not be published after this month. Branch secretaries can obtain the latest details on application to Headquarters.

salaries up to £325, provided salary and bonus do not exceed £350, and with bonus at half rate to officers earning up to £105.

Walthamstow—Previous decision (October) rescinded; now adopted Whitley scale.

URBAN DISTRICTS

Ashby-de-la-Zouch—Delete decision reported in October; council is not paying any bonus.
Colne Valley—Previous decision (June) rescinded; now adopted second Whitley council award, with bonus of £30 on salaries over £300.

Farnborough—Previous decision (September) rescinded; now adopted first Whitley council award.

WAR SERVICE AND

THE association has been approached recently about the case of a temporary employee who was engaged on trunk road work which was terminated under instructions from the Ministry of Transport. The employee was a contributor under the Local Government Superannuation Act, 1937, but as he was a member of the Territorial Army, ceased to serve the local authority on September 1, 1939, on taking up war service. At that date he had been in the service of the local authority for less than six months. In November, 1940, the local authority served on him a notice to terminate his appointment, because the Ministry of Transport had notified it that the Ministry could no longer make any contribution towards his salary.

The question arose as to the effect of the notice to terminate the appointment in view of the provisions of section 13 of the Act of 1937 with regard to the reckoning of contributing service of an employee who ceases to be employed by the local authority but within 12 months after so ceasing becomes a contributory employee under another local authority. It was suggested that, as the employee is on war service, he would probably be unable to obtain another appointment with a local authority within 12 months, which would result in his losing the right to reckon previous service as contributing service, and would also result in his having to pay a 6 per cent contribution if he did eventually obtain another appointment with a local authority.

The employee was advised by the association that, in view of section 3 of the Local Government Staffs (War Service) Act, 1939, and the fact that he actually ceased to serve the local authority on September 1, 1939, in order to undertake war service, his period of war service would be reckonable as contributing service for the purposes of the Act of 1937. He was advised, also, that the notice given to terminate his appointment did not adversely affect his superannuation rights, which are preserved by that section of the Local Government Staffs (War Service) Act. It therefore followed that his service for superannuation purposes would be continuous from September 1, 1939, until his war service ceases, and that there could be no disqualifying break of service during that period.

He was further advised that the notice given to terminate his appointment was ineffective, as he had already ceased to serve the local authority when his war service began, and by section 14 (1) of the National Service (Armed Forces) Act, 1939, the local authority is bound to reinstate him in its employment at the termination of his war service in an occupation and under conditions not less favourable to him than those which would have been applicable to him had he not been called out for war service.

The views expressed by the association were submitted to the appropriate committee of the local authority, which had no hesitation in withdrawing the notice terminating the employee's appointment. The matter was also submitted officially to the Ministry of Transport, and it has agreed to allow for grant the amount of the balance of civil pay which the local authority is paying the employee

War Pay Position

AT the time of going to press, 1,130 local authorities had reached decisions on the making up of war service pay. The position then was:

ENGLAND AND WALES

	Full Pay	Qual. Pay	No Pay	No Dec.
County Councils	24	37	—	—
County Boroughs	33	48	2	—
Met. Boroughs	26	3	—	—
Boroughs	116	112	19	—
Urban Districts	144	147	53	—
Rural Districts	106	128	20	—
Others	17	11	—	—

SCOTLAND

County Councils	4	25	1
Burghs	6	38	8
Others	1	1	—

Total	477	550	103
Percentage of total decisions	42.2	48.7	9.1

Northfleet—Previous decision (December) rescinded; now adopted first Whitley council award.

Shipley—Previous decision (May) rescinded; now adopted first Whitley council award.

Skelton and Brotton—Previous decision (February, 1940) rescinded; now adopted North Eastern provincial council scale from October 1, 1940.

Staveley—Previous award of 3s. p.w. (February, 1940) increased to 5s. from June, 1940.

Wigston—Previous decision (July) rescinded; now adopted first Whitley council award.

OTHER AUTHORITIES

Thames Conservancy—Previous decision (December) rescinded; now giving 2s. 6d. p.w. to junior clerks earning from £65 to £117; 5s. p.w. to 3rd-class clerks earning from £130 to £235, and Whitley council scale (first award) on salaries between £235 and £500.

SUPERANNUATION

under the Local Government Staffs (War Service) Act and the local authority's superannuation contribution, notwithstanding the fact that the employee had not served with the local authority for six months before undertaking war service, which was a condition of Circular No. 540 (Roads).

WHITLEY COUNCIL FOR NURSES

AT last, nurses in local government service have their own Whitley council. The inaugural meeting of the local authorities' Nursing Services Joint Committee, which is a constituent member of the National Whitley Council, was held at the Royal College of Nursing on January 10.

The staffs' side is composed of eight members of the staffs' side of the National Whitley Council, including 14 NALGO members—Mr. H. Allen, chairman of the National Council, Mr. A. G. Bolton, Mr. E. A. S. Young, Mr. J. E. N. Davis, and Mr. T. M. Kershaw—and eight members of the Royal College of Nursing.

After formal business had been transacted, the joint secretaries, Mr. Haden Corser and Mr. E. Bishop (joint secretaries of the National Council) and Miss F. G. Goodall, secretary of the Royal College of Nursing, were instructed to prepare a memorandum on urgent matters requiring attention by the joint committee.

N.B.S. PASSBOOK AUDIT

To facilitate the annual audit of the passbooks of shareholders and depositors in the NALGO Building Society, and to ensure their return to members with the least possible delay, the books should be sent to Headquarters in accordance with the following scheme.

Metropolitan District—between February 24 and March 8.

North-Western, North Wales and North-Eastern Districts—between March 8 and March 29.

Yorkshire, E. Midland, W. Midland and Eastern Districts—between March 29 and April 19.

Remaining Districts—between April 19 and May 10.

Each passbook should be accompanied by evidence of association branch membership—the green card (OR/S.3), the white receipt (OR/S.1), or an individual or bulk certificate from the treasurer—unless the investor is not eligible for membership of NALGO.

NALGO EXAMINATIONS

The following candidates passed in the NALGO examinations held in December, 1940:

INTERMEDIATE GRADE

F. W. Neeve, town clerk's dept., Middlesbrough C.B.

FINAL GRADE

S. R. Dover, town clerk's dept., Yeovil B.

W. A. Hume, clerk's dept., Darlington, R.D.

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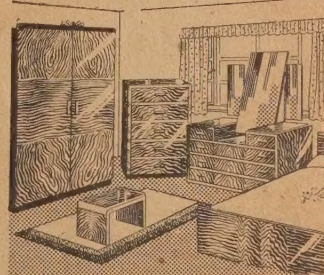
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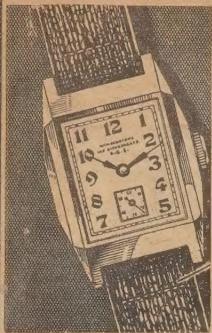
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